

A N  
ESSAY  
ON THE  
CONTEMPT  
OF THE  
WORLD.

By WILLIAM NICHOLLS, B.D.  
*late Fellow of Merton Colledge in  
Oxford; now Rector of Selsey in  
Suffex, and Chaplain to the Right Ho-  
nourable Ralph Earl of Mountagu.*

*Sperne: Voluptates nocet empty Dolor  
Voluptas. Hor. Ep. i.*

In the SAVOR:

Printed by E. Jones, for Francis Saunders, at  
the Blue Anchor on the Lower Walk of  
the New Exchange in the Strand. 1694.

Y. A. 2000

1000

CONTRACT

FOR

WORK

ON

THE

PROJECT

OF

THE

CONTRACT



---

---

TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE  
*Sir John Trevor Kt.*

*Master of the Rolls, Speaker to  
the House of Commons, and  
One of Their Majesties most  
Honourable Privy-Council.*

*Most Honoured Sir,*

**I**T is not that I conceive  
any Worth in this poor  
Treatise, or that I desire  
to gain Reputation to  
it, by prefixing so great a  
Name to so mean a Perfor-  
mance

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

mance, that makes me presume to lay such a Trifle, as This, at your Feet. It is only the Effect of my Gratitude, which must eternally stand obliged to you, for your so great and undeserved Favors; and to testify to the World, that, whatever my weak Labors are able to produce, are a Tribute due to you alone, Who, next under God, have been the only Rewarder of them. It may seem, I am afraid, but an unlucky Undertaking, to make you no better a Return for so good a Preferment, you have been pleas-

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

pleased to promote me to ;  
and that I have but ill reward-  
ed my Patron's Kindness, by  
telling all the World, upon  
how mean a Person his Boun-  
ty was bestowed. But truly  
and sincerely, Sir, my Thank-  
fulness is such, that it could  
not but find a way to express  
it self in, although it were at  
the Hazard of your Honor,  
and my own Reputation; and  
upon mature Consideration,  
I thought it more adviseable,  
rather to let People say you  
have preferred one who was  
little deserving of your Fa-  
vors, than one who was not

A 3      enough

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

enough sensible of them. As to these Papers which I have thus ventured abroad, Part of them were composed a considerable Time ago, under an Indisposition of Body I then had; when I found my self incapable of severer Studies, and when the Bent of my Thoughts was altogether this way. The Rest were fitted up at my Leisure since. If they shall be in any ways serviceable to the World, which, considering the Dissoluteness of the Age, stands in need enough of such Treatises. I shall  
praise

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

praise God heartily for it, or  
it will content me, only to  
have used my Endeavors, and  
to testifie the abundant Thank-  
fulness of

*Your Honors*

*most Humble,*

*most Obliged, and*

*most Dutiful Servant,*

**William Nicholls.**

The Epistle Dedicatory.

2 T H U T K O D E T

---

---

T H E  
CONTENTS.

---

C H A P. I.

**W**Hat is meant by a Contempt of  
the World. Pag. 1

*It is not a Moral Vertue.* 3  
*The Scripture Notion of it.* 4

C H A P. II.

Of the usual Mistakes concerning the Con-  
tempt of the World. 6

*That a Contempt of the World does not consist in  
calling things by odious names, and giving  
them ill Representations.* 6

*It doth not consist in Censoriousness.* 10  
Nor

# The CONTENTS.

<i>Nor in ill natured Reflexions.</i>	15
<i>It is not the Peevishness of Old Age,</i>	18
<i>It is not an Aversion occasioned by Sickness and Indisposition of Body,</i>	23
<i>Nor by Discontent,</i>	25

## CH A P. III.

In what a True Contempt of the World doth Consist.	P. 30
---	-------

### S E C T. I.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in Christian Magnanimity, or Greatness of Mind.	30
---	----

*The old Philosophical Magnanimity was nothing  
but Pride and Singularity.*

*This Magnanimity is grounded, 1. Upon the Dig-  
nity of our Calling.*

*2. On the Honor of our Founder.*

*3. Upon the excellent Rules of our Religion.*

*4. Upon the Greatness of our Rewards.*

### S E C T. II.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Content.	40
--	----



# The CONTENTS.

15	<i>The Notion of Contentedness.</i>	41
18	<i>That we should not trust in Riches.</i>	42
and	<i>That we should not fear the Loss of our Riches.</i>	
23		45
25	<i>That we should not grieve at the Loss of Riches.</i>	
		47
	<i>That we should not repine in low Circumstances.</i>	
		50
oth	<i>That we should not eagerly desire great Riches.</i>	54
30	<i>Answer to the Miser's Apology.</i>	60

## S E C T. III.

list	<i>That a Contempt of the World doth consist</i>	
ness	<i>in being Temperate.</i>	62
30		
	<i>Of Abstinence.</i>	64
bing	<i>Which consists in not eating over much of our or-</i>	
31	<i>dinary Food.</i>	65
Dig-	<i>In not making our constant Food of the most deli-</i>	
32	<i>cious Meats.</i>	69
34	<i>In not feeding upon things which supply extraor-</i>	
36	<i>dinary Nourishment,</i>	72
37	<i>In observing the Duty of Fasting.</i>	73
	<i>Of Sobriety.</i>	75
	<i>That a man should not drink to Intemperance, or</i>	
	<i>to a Loss of his Reason.</i>	75
list	<i>That he should not make others Drunk.</i>	77
40	<i>That he should not spend too much time in Drink-</i>	
	<i>ing.</i>	79
The	<i>That</i>	

# The CONTENTS.

<i>That he should not drink at unseasonable hours.</i>	80
<i>Nor spend too much Money.</i>	81
<i>Of Chastity.</i>	83
<i>That we should avoid all unclean Actions whatsoever, in an unmarried State.</i>	ibid.
<i>Because they are to the Disparagement of our Nature.</i>	84
<i>Contrary to the Design of Matrimony.</i>	85
<i>And to God's Word.</i>	87
<i>Answer to the Libertines Objections in favor of Fornication.</i>	88, 89
<i>That we should preserve the Marriage-Bed undefiled.</i>	90
<i>The Wickedness of the Adulterer.</i>	92
—— <i>Of the Adulterous Husband.</i>	93
—— <i>Of the Adulterous Wife.</i>	95
<i>That Chastity doth consist in a modest Behaviour.</i>	96
<i>The Origin of Pudicity.</i>	97
<i>Reflexions on the Immodesty of the Age.</i>	99

## S E C T. IV.

<i>That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Humble.</i>	100
<i>That we should retain the meanest thoughts, we possibly can of our selves, in respect of God.</i>	101
<i>That we should not be proud of God's Gifts.</i>	106
<i>That</i>	

# THE CONTENTS.

<i>That we should not seek after Punctilio's of Honor, Titles, Precedency, &amp;c.</i>	113
<i>That we should not affect things above our Abilities and Circumstances.</i>	115
<i>That we should diligently obey and respect our Superiors.</i>	119
<i>That we should behave our selves obligingly to all our Inferiors, of what Condition soever.</i>	122

## SECT. V.

<i>That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Patient.</i>	127
--	-----

1. <i>Under the Loss of Goods, as,</i>	
—Our Estates.	128
—Our Relations and Friends.	129
—Our Good Name.	132
—Our Expectation of Preferment,	135
—Unsuccessfulness of our Children.	138
2. <i>Under the Presence of Evil, as,</i>	
—Labor and Difficulty.	140
—The Infirmities of other men.	143
—Injuries and Affronts.	146
—Pains and Diseases.	148
—Any Persecution which may befall us.	151

## SECT.

# THE CONTENTS.

## SECT. VI.

The Contempt of the World consists in setting our Affections upon God and Heavenly Things. 153

Which consists,

I. In an hearty Love of God. 155

We must love God, Because,

1st. He is the most perfect and admirable Being. 157

1. Study and admire the Perfections of the Divine Nature. *ibid.* The Eternity of God. 158.

His Omnipotence. 159. Knowledge.

*ibid.* Holiness. *ibid.* His Truth. 160.

His Justice. 161. His Mercy. 162

2. We must endeavor to our utmost, to imitate God, and act agreeably to his Nature. 164

2ly. Because he is our Benefactor. 168

1. Consider the innumerable Benefits he bestows upon us. *ibid.*

2. We must shew all the signs of a hearty Love, and sincere Gratitude. 172

Object. We endeavor to live well, but do not find such a passionate Love of God in us as others do. 175

Ans. 1. Those who obey all God's Commands do love him. *ibid.*

2. There

## THE CONTENTS.

2. *There are different Degrees in the Spiritual Life.* 176
- II. *In an earnest Desire of enjoying God and heavenly Things.* 179
  1. *We must heartily believe all that God has promised of them.* *ibid.*
  2. *Often meditate upon the Greatness and Eternity of them.* 180
  3. *Earnestly desire and long for them.* 185

## C H A P. IV.

Of the Reasons why we should condemn the World. 187

Reason 1. *Because the Pleasures thereof are common to Evil men as well as Good.* 188

Reason 2. *Because they are so uncertain.* 192  
*Riches.* 193. *Honor.* 194. *Beauty.* 195.

Reason 3. *The things of this World are in themselves vain and inconsiderable, where the Vanity of desiring a Name in the World is reflected upon.* 197, 198, 199

Reason 4. *They are unsatisfying.* 204

1. *Because they are not the true Good of the Soul.* *ibid.*

2. *Because they promise more Enjoyment than they can give.* 205

3. *Because they have much Evil or Sorrow mixed with them.* 207

Reason

## The CONTENTS.

Reason 5. *They are cloying and surfeiting.* 209

1. *We quickly find an end of all the Satisfaction they afford us.* ibid.

2. *They generally indispose our Bodies.* 210

Reason 6. *The Pleasures of the World ought to be despised, because we must in a very little while leave them.* 211

Reason 7. *Because we are in pursuit of far greater Pleasures.* 214

*A Dialogue on the Contempt of the World, between the Tempter and the Soul.* 216

---

AN

A N  
E S S A Y

On the Contempt of the

W O R L D.

C H A P. I.

*What is meant by a Contempt of the World.*

**I** Do not design to Entertain the Reader with only some Witty Extemporary Thoughts upon this Subject, in the way which generally Essays are wrote in, where greater Care for the most is taken to say something Fine and Surprizing, than Good and Useful; and where 'tis looked upon more Airy and Gentleman-like to leave all the Thoughts loose and undigested, than to be too much cramped up in a Scho ar-like Method. Some Extraordinary Gentlemen who have wrote in that kind, have purposely avoided Method, because it looks too like

B

the

the Schools and the Sermon-makers, and for that Reason might never happen to be read. *Mountaign*, a Man of a peculiar Genius, and a Wit that surprizes most by rambling from his Subject, and sticking to no Method (we may call him the French *Pindar*) he has done admirably well this way; but I doubt whether some who have Imitated him in this, have been alike successful. But be this as it will, I will venture, like a blunt Scholar, to tell my Reader before-hand what I have to say, and to lay down before him the Method I design in this Treatise to pursue.

- I. Therefore I will shew what is meant by the Contempt of the World.
- II. I shall rectify some mistakes about it.
- III. I shall shew in what it consists.
- IV. I shall shew what Reasons we have for to endeavour after it.

I. To shew what is meant by the Contempt of the World. Now by Contemning the World, I do not mean any sower disliking every thing about us, nor a haughty disrespect and undervaluing of God's Creatures, and thinking none of them good enough for us; *but such an indifferency to every thing which relates only to this Life, such as Wit, Learning,*



## Cap. I. Contempt of the World. 3

*Learning, Beauty, Honour, Riches, &c. as shews that we chiefly value the things of the other World, and only take up with these as a comfortable Substance and Bait, as we are going on forward in our Journey to Heaven.* Now this is not a Virtue purely Moral, and which we might have come to the knowledge of by the Light of Nature without Revelation; for certainly we Christians are more obliged to condemn the World than the Heathens were, who knew of no other World than this. They indeed were obliged to use the good things of this World agreeably to the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety, so as not to make themselves, by the Enjoyment of them, Sots and Beasts. But it could never be expected that they, who had no Revelation of another Life after this, should be so perfectly listless and indifferent to this Worlds Pleasures, as those who expect Pleasures of another sort at God's *Right hand for evermore.* They were not assured of another Life after this, till God *brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel*; and therefore they in reason ought to have valued this Lifes Goods as well as they could, and to set a greater value upon them than we ought in reason to do; but 'tis our Duty to be very easily satisfied with any small Portion God is pleased to give us of them; not

eagerly to wish to get them, nor to overrate them when we have them, but to look upon them very small and inconsiderable in comparison with the Happiness of the other World, and to be ready to part with the dearest of them, when they come in competition with the means of attaining that. This is a Duty which the Holy Scripture does in very many places inculcate, as well in the Old Testament as in the New. The holy Patriarch is so far from Idolizing the good things of this World, that though God had blessed him with Flocks and Herds, &c. yet he complains, that *few and evil had been the days of his Pilgrimage*, Gen. 47. 9. Thus the Psal'mist bids us, *not to trust in oppression, and if riches increase not to set our heart upon them*, Psal. 62. 10. And Holy Job maintains his Integrity because *he had not made Gold his hope, nor said to fine Gold thou art my confidence*, Job 31. 24. But the New Testament is full of Instructions and Exhortations to this Virtue. Our Saviour tells us, *If any man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple*, Luk. 14. 25. So again, he delivers a whole discourse, Luk. 12. upon this Subject, and particularly commands us *not to seek what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, &c. but rather*

## Chap.I. Contempt of the World. 5

ther to seek the Kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto us. So the Apostle, 1 Cor. 8. 31. bids us use the World as not abusing it. And he tells us, God forbid that he should glory, save only in the Cross of our Lord Jesus, by whom the world is Crucified unto him, and he unto the world, Gal. 6. 14. So Col. 3. 1, & 2. He exhorts us to seek those things that are above, and to set our affections on things above and not on things below. And so, Phil. 3. 8. He counts all things loss for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, for whom he had suffered the loss of all things, and did count them but Dung that he might be with Christ. St. John likewise commands us not to love the World, neither the things that are in the World. If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 Joh. 2. 15. And St. James informs us, That the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God, Jam. 4. 4. This is sufficient to shew that the whole tenor of the Gospel does recommend to us a Contempt of Worldly things, in comparison of our eternal happiness; and does withal inform us, what is meant by such a Contempt of the World.

## C H A P. II.

*Of the usual Mistakes concerning the Contempt of the World.*

EVERY Christian is perswaded that the things of this World are to be despised, but every one is not convinced in what manner he is to do it ; every Man follows his own Method, and is for Contemning the World after his way. Now the mistakes which arise upon this Account may be reduced to these two Heads ;

1. Either such as arise from the Nature of the thing it self ; or,
2. Such as arise from Mens Prejudices concerning them.

First, Of those which arise from the Nature of the thing it self ; and those are these :

*Mistake in mis-  
cating things  
indifferent.*

I. To think a Contempt of the World, does consist in putting ill Names upon the good things of the World, and giving them odious Representations. This may be indeed our  
of

of a Pious design, to make Men the more out of Love with them; but then it is oftentimes in contradiction to Truth, and to the disparagement of Gods Creation. And thus they do that call *Beauty* nothing else but a Painted Sepulchre, but Corruption adorned, to be like the Apples of *Sodom*, Beautiful without, and nothing but Dust within; That call *Honour* nothing but the breath of the Multitude, a Popular Wind; and the like. So others call the *Riches* of the World, *Gold and Silver*, &c. a little shining Dirt, a little beautified Earth, nothing better than the rest but only in the Opinion of Covetous Mad-men; That account great Possessions to be but the lucky hit of a few Fools that are Chanced to be Born to them; that serve to no purpose but to make themselves uneasy under them, and other People to Gape after them. They esteem Mens Natural Abilities, their quickness of Parts, and strength of Reason, to be but a little flash of Thought, to entertain Wise People, and to perplex Silly ones. Now 'tis an easie thing for Men of good Parts, and a keen Temper, to Rally upon, and to Undervalue any thing; Nay, Dullness, with ill Nature, or Discontent, will produce the same effect. Of Ancient Time, the Cynick Philosophers were remarkable for this,

who were wont to Snarle at every thing that did not Suit with their Crabbed Institution, to take every thing by the worst handle, and to invent tart Sayings upon the best things to make them look ridiculous. Hence they got the Name of Cynicks, or the Sect of Dogs. And we have too, in our time, many People that think they shew themselves good Christians, if they can get but a little of this Cant in their Mouths, and talk o'r some poor silly Declamation in disparagement of those things which God has made purposely to be admired. For certainly, a Beauteous Personage is a great Blessing, unless abused to Evil purposes. Thus it was bestow'd as a Blessing upon the Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, to have beautiful Wives, *Gen. 20. 2. Gen. 24. 16. Gen. 29. 27.* And it was one of the Comforts of *Job* after his Calamities, that *there were no Women found so fair as the Daughters of Job, Job 42. 15.* And the Psalmist Prays it as a Blessing upon his People, *that their Daughters may be Beauteous as the polished corners of the Temple, Psal. 144. 12.* Nay, God himself, who does usually illustrate his own Perfections by the resemblance of some Perfection we find in Humane Nature, does frequently express his Glory by the Name of Beauty, *Job 40. 10 Psal. 27. 4. Is. 4. 2.* So likewise, 1

p.II. Chap.II. *Contempt of the World.* 9

*Chron.* 29. 12. Riches and Honour are said to be bestowed by God. *Both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all.* So *Job*, 1. 10. *Job's substance increased in the Land because God blessed the work of his hands.* And God promises to the good Man that *feareth the Lord*, that *wealth and riches shall be in his House*, *Psal.* 112. 3. So Wisdom is said to come from God, *Job* 28. 20. The *Psal*-mist begs of God to *teach him to know Wisdom*, *Psal.* 51. 6. And the Wise man, *Eccl.* 2. 26. tells us, that *God giveth to a man Wisdom.* Now to go about to undervalue and to vilify those things which God has design'd for Blessings and Benefits, must be so far from being our Duty, that it must be a very great fault, or at least a very dangerous mistake; for generally this Custom does proceed from a malicious, or invidious temper, when men are sowed with Discontent or Envy; they do not find fault with these things because they are blame-worthy, but because they themselves do not possess them. But however, let them do it out of what design they will, the Actions can never be Justifiable, not only because they, by that, undervalue some of Gods choicest Blessings, but because they hinder Mens Gratitude, which they ought to pay to God for such Favors received. For if Beauty, and Wealth and Honor be such  
contemp-

contemptible things, that are rather Plagues than Blessings : To what purpose should we thank God for that which we are ne're the better for his bestowing ? Thus we see, under the notion of *Advancing Religion*, some Men destroy the best Part of all Religion, *a Thankfulness for God's Mercies.*

*In Censuring  
what they do  
not like.*

II. 'Tis a Mistake to think, that a Contempt of the World doth consist in censuring the Actions of others which they do not approve of, though in themselves they are unblameable. 'Tis observable, that Persons who are addicted to such a way of Living, or accustomed to such kind of Talk, Company, Garb or Diversions, are so prejudiced against any thing else that is different from it, as to take it for little less than Prophan and Unchristian. Thus Phlegmatick and Melancholly Persons, that mostly sort out to themselves Acquaintance of their own Spleen, they fancy that the Merry and Debonair do exceed the Rules of all Sobriety ; that they are not serious enough to be Christians ; that none are fit to be saved, but only such as are fit to be Cloister'd. There are several in the World, that are never well, but when they are declaiming against the Pride of the Age, and the Fantasticalness, and Vanity of



Cap. II. Contempt of the World. II

our Modern Fashions ; and yet take as much Pride themselves in keeping up to an old antiquated Dress, which has hardly been in Use this Century. I have known a Gentleman, who has thought he has shown a Wonderful Contempt of the World, by talking against Drinking, and has Condemned some, which he never knew Guilty of any Excess that way, only for mispending their Time, and wasting the Creature, and yet the same Person has Hunted all the Week, and spent more in Horse-flesh in a Month, than the others have spent in Wine in a Year. I have known another, that would make a Conscience of Losing Two Pence at Cards, whilst he was Playing a Guinea at Bowels. I have seen others, who have Condemned all manner of common Exercises and Diversions, and yet have spent a great deal more Time in Riding, or Walking, or Santering about ; And yet in the mean time they Fancy this is Living in a Contempt of the World, and that they must needs set their *Affections on things above*, when they pass such a severe Censure *on things below*. But such Persons should do well to consider, that the Goodness or Illness of such Actions, does not depend upon their Aversion to them, but upon their Agreement or Disagreement to God's Commands, and the Occasion of Sin, which may

may probably follow upon them. Thus, to be *Merry* and *Pleasant*, is no more sinful, than to be *Serious* and *Thoughtful*, and one argues an ill Man no more than the other. Certainly, God did not make Religion only for the Phlegmatick and Melancholy, for down-looks and distorted Countenances; as if it were the Mark of a Saint to look sad and ghastly, and to walk about like a fullen speechless Apparition. An Innocent Mirth is the peculiar Priviledge of good Men, for all others have cause to Sorrow. Nor do I think *Singing* and *Dancing* to be such foul Crimes, as some Puritanical Sermons, in the Days of our Fore-fathers would bespeak them to be; though 'tis certain they may be abused to evil Purposes: And so our ordinary Food may be perverted to Gluttony, and our Drink to Drunkenness; which yet does not abridge us of the lawful Use of either. I cannot see how any innocent *Recreation*, or *Pastime*, which is allowed by Law, should be sinful in it self, more than Riding or Walking; the only Fault I can espy, is only in the Circumstances, as when Men Play for too much, or too long, or at unseasonable Times, or when they are of such a Constitution, as are thereby frequently irritated into Passion, or the like. So again, as for *going Habited* in the *Fashion* of the Time we live

## Chap. II. *Contempt of the World.* 13

live in, can be no Sin, unless to wear any Cloaths at all be so: For if we must wear some Cloaths, Why not those of our own Time, rather than those of any other? Why should we run up to the old *Jews* and *Romans* for the Cut of our Garments? Or why should we go twenty years backwards for a Fashion? There is certainly less of Pride in letting a Fashion come to us, than in running back thirty years for that. There is no more Sin in Wearing the Garb of Ninety three, than of Fifty three; only the Latter argues more Pride, because it argues more singularity. If we take care not to run the first into every new Fashion, but to take it up with our Neighbours as it comes? if we do not spend too much time, nor value our selves upon them; if we do not affect to be in the Extreams of every new Humor, nor to go above our Quality, or disagreeable to our Age or Profession, we may wear what we will, and let morose People talk what they please: For the Use of Cloaths in the World, is as well to distinguish Qualities, as to defend from the Weather: so that 'tis as much a Fault for Persons of better Rank to under-go themselves, as it is for the Meaner to go above.

I confess they have the most to say against *Drinking*, because it does so often occasion  
Sin.

Sin. Now though I esteem Drunkenness, or a constant Sotting, though it has not that Effect to be one of the beastliest things Human Nature is guilty of, yet a Glass or two in the Entertainment of a Friend, or in concerting of Business, can be no means unlawful; if we be sure to keep a wide Distance from the Bounds of Intemperance, both in our selves and in others. For why should a Glass or two of Wine be more Intemperance than a Collation of Sweetmeats? Or why should we be condemned for Drinking that when we are not adry, more than for eating these when we are not an hungred? All these Actions, and a great many more of the same Nature, may be Good or Ill, according as they are used; but to condemn all Persons for the Use of these things, is as unreasonable, as to condemn every one that uses either Water or Fire, or Knives or Swords, because it is possible that they may use all these things to their own Destruction. This is not a Contempt of the World, but only of such things we perhaps take no Pleasure in doing: Nay, it is so far from condemning the World, that it is the Maintaining and Cherishing two very Worldly Affections: I mean, Uncharitableness and Self-Love, when we, without Ground, pass a too severe Censure upon the Actions of  
our

Cap. II. *Contempt of the World.* 15

our innocent Neighbour, and would be prescribing our Humors and Inclinations as a Rule of his Actions.

II. The Second sort of Mistakes concerning the Contempt of the World, are such which arises from Men's Prejudices; because they are some way or other, by some Vice, or Passion, or Constitution, or Infirmary, disposed to speak against the Actions of the Generality of the World; and this they take to be the true Christian Contempt of it. And this is evident,

I. In Persons of an ill Nature. *Mistakes from ill Nature.* We all know that Nature has not made us all of the same Mould; some Tempers she has made of the finest Contexture, and others seem to have come out of her Hands but rough Work. Some Natures are of that soft, even, delicate Disposition, that they seem to be framed altogether for the good of the World; they are so full of Love and Kindness, and Goodness, so full of Charity and Generosity, that they are unwilling to disoblige any one; they take a Pride in advancing the Fame, and Honour, and Welfare of others, and seem to take it to heart, to hear of the Miscarriages or ill Repute of any they converse with, and will tender their Charity to the utmost stretch,

stretch to conceive, if possible, a favorable Opinion of them. So again, others are of that rugged warp'd Disposition, that they seem to bear a good Affection to no body ; that like Hedges, lie wrapt up within themselves, and turn out their Prickles to every one else ; that are in a manner made up with Vinegar, so as to sowre and curdle upon every thing, and to like nothing but what they do themselves. I am unwilling to charge all this ill Temper, which we may find too much of in the World, upon Nature only ; but I believe 'tis Nature, though none of the best, degenerated with Pride and Malice, which runs into this ugly Contexture, and that does so much Mischiefe, and occasions so much Trouble in the World. Now People of this Temper delight always to be biting and snarling at what others do or say ; that would be picking out Faults where there are none, and are glad upon all Occasions to meet with Failures in other Men, only to give themselves the Diversion of Railing at them. Now a great many such kind of Men set up for a Christian Contempt of the World, because they find themselves so keen and sharp against the common Occurrences in it ; but this is more of the Devilish, than of the Christian Spirit, for that *wicked One* has his Office and his Name from Accusing and Calumniating. Such  
Men

## Chap.II. *Contempt of the World.* 17

Men are rather *Haters*, than *Contemners* of the *World*; a Company of Curriſh *Timons*, that love Barking for Barking Sake, that rather like the World the better for being bad, becauſe it finds them Entertainment enough for their Spleen. Now, the good Chriſtian that does really, out of an honeſt Heart, deſpiſe the World, is heartily ſorry for the Infirmities and Miſcarriages of Human Kind, and does wiſh that they were fully amended; but theſe, like Toads and Adders, grow fat upon the Poyſon of the World; 'tis their Meat and Drink to find faults, to be railing at. The good Chriſtian that condemns the World, and the prophane Practices of it, has an exemplary Life to witneſs for him, that he does it out of a pure Conſcience; but the ill natur'd Railer, is one who has no other Pretence to Vertue, but by talking againſt Vice; they are generally Men of the worſt Morals, that take up with this ſort of Satyr, only as a blind, or a Jugling-Box to deceive, the Peoples Eyes, by diverting them from their own Vices, thereby to gain the Advantage of calling Whore fiſt. Their Buſineſs is to Gall and Fret the World, more than to deſpiſe it; and if they can but give others Diſquiet, their Work is done. But 'tis demonſtration, that ſuch rather deſire the Torment and Diſquiet of Men, than their Reformation;

mation; because, when by their Railing, they have effected what they designed, rather than want something to rail at, they wil be pulling down their own Work with their own Tongues.

*From Old Age.*

II. Some do mistake the Effects of *Old Age* for a true Contempt of the World. It is certain, that according to the diverse Stages of our Life, we are pleased and entertained with diversity of Objects. When we are Children, we like nothing so well as Rattles and Hobby-Horses; when we grow Men, Wit and Knowledge, and Pleasure and Fame are more apt to Delight us; and some of these too wear off again from us as we grow old. 'Tis a Mistake therefore to fancy, that we are arrived to a Contempt of the World, when we are only come to such a Period of Age; we do not then despise those worldly Pleasures, but only we know not how to relish them. I have known a Lady that had spent her Youth in the most frothy Vanity you can imagine, and as Age came on, she has plum'd her self, and cry'd, how she despised the World! when most People guessed the true Reason was, because the World began to despise her. 'Tis no great Wonder why a Gentlewoman of Seventy should take no Pleasure in Dancing a Jigg;



Cap. II. *Contempt of the World.* 19

Jigg ; or that a Man, who had destroyed Nature before Forty, should at Sixty applaud himself for the Aversion he had arriv'd to, both to Wine and Women. This can be no more said to be a Contempt of the World, than a Man can be said to walk down Stairs, who is tumbled down Headlong. This is a Defect of Nature, and not an overcoming of it : This is far better, no doubt, than what those lewd old People do, who pride themselves in the Sins of their Youth, and when Nature is grown decrepit, enjoy their Vices over again in Imagination. But however, this is far enough from the Vertue which we treat of, for this consists in conflicting with the Pleasures we are able to enjoy, and not in slighting those we cannot. The best way for ancient Persons to try whither they are arrived to a Contempt of the World or no, is to see how they can comport themselves, when those Inclinations are cross'd, which are most incident to old Age. Let them try if they can bear the Loss of a Bag of Gold with as little Impatience as the Disappointment of a Ball or a merry Meeting : And then I will say, indeed they are arrived to a compleat Contempt of the World. But generally this Carping at the Actions of young People, is rather the Infirmary of Old Age, than any Virtue ; such as that Age of Man's Life has

always been remarkable for ; as *Horace* has observed seventeen hundred years ago.

*Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod  
Quærit & inventis miser abstinet ac timet uti :  
Vel quod res omnes timide gelidæque ministrat,  
Dilator, spe longus, iners avidusque futuri,  
Difficilis querulus, laudator temporis acti  
Se puero ; censor castigatoreque minorum.*

Hor. Art. Poet.

*Many Infirmities surround the Old,  
They seek, and yet they dare not use their Gold :  
They are in all their Resolutions slow,  
And timorous in every thing they do.  
The Sadness of the Times is still their Song,  
And none like that they liv'd when they were young.  
They censure all that younger People do,  
And would have Threescore seen in twenty two.*

Nay, *Homer*, many hundred years before him, never brings in old *Nestor* ; but he is undervaluing all that is done by the younger Folks, and praising what he remembers when he was young.

Οἱ πρὶ μὲν βελῆ Δαναῶν—

od  
The Wise you are, good Sirs ; yet all agree  
You must give place for that to Older Me.  
I long convers'd with Wiser men than you,  
Who still did me the chiefest place allow.  
Dryas, Pirothous, those Glorious men  
We ne'r must think to see the like agen.  
On equal Grounds I with brave Ceneus stood,  
And Polyphemus greater than a God.  
The Godlike Theseus d'd give place to me,  
Tho' worthy He of Immortality.  
These were the mighty Champions that freed  
The pester'd Earth from all her monstrous breed.  
Where e'r they went they did for Nestor stay,  
And Nestor always fought as well as they.  
These matchless Heroes did my Counsel hear,  
And by my Wisdom, all their Actions square.  
Therefore do you, you had best take my Advice, &c.

Hom. Iliad. lib. 1.

ore  
e is  
ger  
hen  
Now when we see that this has always  
been the Temper of Old Age, to find fault with  
the Actions of young People, and the present  
sent Customs, it can never reasonably be  
thought to be a Christian Vertue to do so ;  
or that this is that Contempt of the World  
which is enjoyned in the Gospel. The wi-  
ser part of ancient Persons have always con-

quered the natural Peevishness and Querulousness of their Temper, or at least have disguised it : For Reason it self shews that there can be no Ground for it. For why should we suppose that Youth should be delighted with those things that Old Age is, any more than we should suppose the same Person to be both Young and Old. 'Tis the Design of Nature to gratifie these diverse Appetites one after another ; and we may as well expect to have their Constitutions altered before their time, as their Inclinations. That volatile Briskness of Youth will exert it self in Juvenile Gaieties, and Capricious Freedoms, which Age has no tendency to ; and this is rather commendable than blameable, for in a l other Cases we think it so. When we see but a young *Colt* in a Ground, walking about as stiffly as an old Horse, that has been batter'd out fifteen years at the Plough, we should shew our selves but indifferent Jockeys, to meddle with such kind of Cattle ; because it is a thing so strangely unnatural to see. Now I leave any one to judge, why it should be more reasonable to expect, that Men should contradict in this Age, the standing Rules of Nature ; and take up a starched unnatural Melancholiness forty years before their Time. This is no Fault in Youth, unless they let it run into that disorderly Exorbitancy,

bitancy, as is contrary to good Manners, and the Dignity of our Religion; but to reprehend an innocent Gaiety in those years, is only a Fault in them who have not enough considered Human Nature, or who are addicted to a sullen Moroseness, and desire of making all Peop'e like themselves.

3. *Sickness and Weakness of Body* From Sickness and Indisposition. makes some think also, That they are arrived to a true Contempt of the World. When some Persons, thro' Infirmary of Body, find, that they do not relish the Pleasures of the World, they are presently apt to fancy, that they perfectly condemn them; but I am afraid a great many of them really do not. For a Contempt of the World does not consist in a bare not enjoying its Pleasures, but in refusing them when they solicit us. If the former only were the Virtue, Trees and Stones might pretend to it as well as we, because they feel no Satisfaction from the Pleasures of the World neither. Such a Contempt of the World, which arises on y from Disposition of Body, is like a full-cram'd Gluttons Contempt of a Feast, not because he does not like it, but because he cannot tast it. I have known a certain Ingenious Gentleman in the Nation, who, very young, happened

to fall into very bad Company, and broke a good Constitution before Eight and twenty; I have heard this Gentleman, under this Condition, make as pretty Declamations against the Vanity of what we call'd Pleasure, as most you'll find among the old Sages of *Greece* and *Rome*; and has seriously declared with what a wonderful Contempt he look'd down upon those trifles, which he formerly did, and which the World doth still make such Account of. And yet when the same Person, by the Care of a good Physician and strength of Youth, had overcome his Distemper, he presently changed his Sentiments with his course of Life again; he relaps'd into as much Lewdness and Profaneness as before, and became a great Advocate for those very Crimes he under his Sickness did with so much Wit and Reason expose. 'Tis plain here was not such a Contempt of the World as was pretended, and that it was the Incapacity only which Sickness created, that gave the pretended Aver-sion. Indeed, Sickness is often a good Preparative to the Contempt of the World; it is like the straightning a Stick towards the bending it the other way, and God Almighty often sends it for this end: For not to perceive the Pleasures of the World, is one step towards the despising them; but for the  
true

## Chap. II. Contempt of the World. 25

true Contempt we must go yet higher, and despise them whither we can relish the Pleasures of them or no. We must despise them at the same time when our Nature prompts us to desire them, even when our Flesh and Blood are hankering after them, when Temptations beat strong upon us from without, and Grace only and Religion do resist within.

4. *Discontent* is often taken by some for the genuine contempt of the World. When Mens tempers are sowed by some great misfortune they have met withal in their business or designs, which leaves such a damp upon their spirits, that they take but little comfort in the pleasures of the World, they forthwith set up for a contempt of it. The World frowns upon them, and they are resolved to be even with it; and to rail at the World. This is frequently to be seen in many discarded Favorites at Court, who because they cannot enjoy all the World, they will enjoy none of it; whose Ambition has met with a check for mounting so high, and so moves downwards, not out of any natural tendency, but only by a forcible rebound. Thus in other Countreys disappointed Greatness, despised Pride, unfortunate Amours, fill up their Convents with People, who would like the World

*From Discontent.*

World well enough, if it did not cross their Humours. But certainly this is so far from being a Christian Vertue, that it is one of the worst sort of Vices, 'tis an insupportable piece of Pride and Arrogance; and a foolish Impotence of Mind. They have not all that their Ambition unjustly calls for, and therefore they despise that which they may lawfully enjoy. Like Stomachful Children, who, if they cannot have what they like best, will eat nothing at all. They are so far from the true Christian Contempt which *overcometh the World*, that they let every little silly accident of the World overcome them, and make perfect slaves of their minds. The true Christian lets the afflictions of the World fly over his Head, but these suffer them to light upon them with such force and power, as to make them to lie struggling and groveling under them. Such Mens exclaiming against the World is no sign of their contempt of it any more, than an unsuccessful Lover can be said to hate his Mistress; when his railing against her does not shew he has no passion for her, but only a fruitless one. We find in Scripture two as wicked Men as are perhaps recorded there, to have despised all the good things of the World, and to have enjoyed n thing of all that great affluence they were provided with, because they had met



## Cap. II. Contempt of the World. 27

met with a disappointment in their desires. The first is the proud *Haman*, that great Minister of State to *Ahasuerus* the mighty *Persian* Monarch, who had the chief power under the King over a hundred and seventy Provinces, that cou'd boast of the glory of his Riches, and the multitude of his Children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Servants of the King, &c. yet all this (says he) availeth me nothing, so long as I see *Mordecai* the Jew sitting at the Kings Gate, *Esther* 5. 13. This Man you see could enjoy none of all these Worldly pleasures he was so amply provided with; his despised Pride, and the respect which was denied him by a poor Jew, made all these glories, which the greatest Men did desire, and so few could attain to, perfectly flat and insipid; nay, he perfectly despises them all in comparison of that sweet revenge, he hopes to take upon his stiff Adversary. And yet no one can call this a Contempt of the World, because it is rather a Worshipping and Idolizing a small and contemptible part of it, an inconsiderable punctilio of Worldly Honour, which every Wise Man ought to despise; but yet it made such an impression upon this great Man, that it swallowed up all the other delights he might have enjoyed, and made him

him rather choose to be miserable to himself, than not to be valued by another. The second Instance is that of King *Ahab*, who though he possessed all the Riches and Honours of a Crown; yet because he was disappointed of the purchase of a poor Mans Vineyard, the soft delights of his Palace give no relish to him upon this disappointment; but amidst all the Luxurious Entertainment of an Eastern Court, *he laid him down upon his Bed, and turned away his Face, and would eat no Bread, 2 King. 21. 4.* Now this foolish Prince was so far from contemning the World, that he doted upon it; his Vanity or Covetousness or both had got that ascendant over him, that he would rather suffer his Life to be miserable, than to want some additional Happiness he fancied he should acquire, by possessing that poor Mans Inheritance. Therefore the best way to try, when we lie under discontent, whether our contempt of the World be true and genuine, and such as the Gospel doth recommend, is to consider whether or no we should despise the World at the same rate, if the causes of our Discontent were removed; if we should after the same manner undervalue Riches, and Pleasures, and Honours, in a mighty affluence of all these, as when we are in the greatest want of them; if we do Despise the World

out of Love to God, and Obedience to his Commands, and not out of Love to our selves, and to gratifie our own Spleen and Passions; if our neglect of all Worldly things is bottomed upon the Excellency of our Immortal Natures, upon the greatness of our everlasting Reward in Heaven, to which not only the Sufferings, but all the *Enjoyments of this present World are not worthy to be compared.* But to despise and undervalue the World upon any other Account, bespeaks us only to be of a peevish angry temper, not to have a mind to improve our Religion by it, but only to vent our Spleen. And indeed, no one will like the World the less for such Railing against it any more than they will believe Discarded Favourites, Despairing Amoretto's, and Disbanded Soldiers, when they Rail against their Princes, their Mistresses, or their Commanders. I have now done with the mistakes concerning *the Contempt of the World* I thought fit to mention, and I proceed to shew in what a Contempt of the World does consist.

---

## C H A P. III.

*In what a true Contempt of the World doth consist.*

NOW I think a Man may be said to have arrived to a true Christian Contempt of the World, if he take care to observe these five particulars.

1. *To keep always the true Christian greatness of Mind.*
2. *To be Content.*
3. *To practice all manner of Temperance.*
4. *To be Humble.*
5. *To be Patient.*

## S E C T. I.

*That a Contempt of the World doth consist in a Christian Magnanimity, or Greatness of Mind.*

First, Therefore a Contempt of Magnanimity. the World doth consist in the Christian Magnanimity, or in keeping up to that Greatness of Mind which is required under the Gospel. That Magnanimity or Greatness of Mind which was to talk

Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 31

of and extolled by the Heathens, I am inclined to believe was rather Pride than any thing else. We find the Stoicks Books full of this kind of Declamation; They are all for Magnifying this sort of Temper, which they thought they had framed for themselves, by appearing above the rest of the World, by making themselves in a manner Gods, and the rest of the World Slaves and Fools. They did not so much endeavour to raise in the World a great Opinion of Virtue, as one of themselves, and all those great Elogiums they invented upon the Contempt of Pleasure, and the Philosophical Happiness in the midst of Misery, seem'd rather design'd upon the Philosophers themselves than their Subject: For if we look into the History of the Antients, we shall find, that few of all the Antient Philosophers, excepting only *Socrates*, (whom we may call an inspired Heathen, and a Forerunner of Christianity) but lived contrary to the Opinions they profess: And indeed, the Principles they went upon were too weak to support that Greatness of Mind which they pretended to: For there is no reason Absolutely to despise the good Things of this World, and to raise our Minds so far above them, as not to think them worth our regarding in themselves; For the Fabrick

of

of the Universe is a most glorious and admirable Composure, the Pleasures of the Earth are Entertaining and Delightful, and are the subject of no Man's Contempt simply considered. But when we consider them in Comparison with the Joys of another World, then they seem such little empty Nothings, that any Wise Man must contemn and undervalue them, when he has his Eye fixed upon that Blessed State of Immortality. Now, because the Philosophers and others among the Heathens, had no Revelation of this other State, they could not upon these just grounds undervalue the good Things of this World; and therefore when they pretended to it, their Aversion seemed bottomed chiefly upon Pride, or Moroseness, or at least an Affectation of Singularity. But we Christians have all the Reason in the World to put on a Spirit of Magnanimity, and to have our Souls raised above the rest of Mankind, because we cannot turn our Eyes upon any part almost of our Religion, but we find enough satisfaction to elevate the most Drooping Spirit.

1. As first, when we consider barely our Profession, how we stand distinguished from the rest of the World, that *God has called us with an holy calling,* 2 Tim. 1. *that we are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Na-*

### Chap.III. Contempt of the World. 33

*Nation, a peculiar People,* 1 Pet.2.9. These Considerations are sufficient to raise our Minds above all Worldly Satisfactions, and make us look on them as mean and pitiful Things, *if we have that true sense of them which we ought to have.* For what greater Honour can we possibly attain to, than this of our Christian Profession? We are wont strangely to overvalue, to talk, and think mighty things of our selves, when we are raised to a higher step of Honour than we were before; only because our Prince has vouchsafed to lend to us a Beam or two of his Dignity, and has given us a special Badge or Character to be distinguished from the multitude of the Nation. We are apt to rate our selves something higher in our own Estimation, when we consider how much we stand in the Favour of so great a Person. But when we consider, that we Christians are the Favorites of the Great God of Heaven and Earth, that we receive our Title from the King of Kings, who is ten thousand times more above the most puissant Monarch, than he is above the meanest of his Subjects; when we consider that he has given us this distinguishing Character of our Profession, that he himself has directed us to a Calling; thereby to be distinguished from the confused Multitude of Mankind; this should inspire our Souls with such noble Thoughts and Resolutions,

lutions, as should make us seem above every thing we see about us here : For what Honour can Riches or Titles reflect upon us, when we are already invested with the Ensigns of Honour from God himself? Or however we shall shamefully disgrace the Dignity of our Profession, if we let others value themselves more upon a few empty Titles, which are only gilded Names, a few Words or Syllables, which the People are commanded to speak with Respect, than we do this Dignity of our Christian Profession, which we have delivered to us by the Hand and Authority of our great Great Creator.

2. We see most Men that have taken up any kind of Calling or Profession, whether Liberal or otherways, do retain an extraordinary Respect and Veneration for the Founder of that Profession, and do Pride themselves in being Followers of so eminent a Person in his Generation. Thus we find, that not only Monks and Friars do think they have an Honour derived upon them from the Founders of their respective Orders, but even Mechanicks are wont to set a Value upon themselves from the Reputation of the Author of their Mystery. But none came up in this Point to the ancient Philosophers (who were very good Judges of the Reason of Things) for they seem often times in a manner



Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 35

manner transported, when they reflect upon the Honour they received from being Scholars and Followers of the Great Masters and Authors of their Sect. We may perceive very often *Lucretius* to leave his Subject, to run Panegyricks upon his admired Master *Epicurus*. Nay, *Tully* and *Seneca* frequently break a Period to commend *Plato* or *Zeno*. But what are all these to the Author of our Profession, our Lord *Jesus Christ*, God, *Blessed for ever*? These 'tis true, were great Men, and famous in their Generations, who have blessed the World with curious Inventions, and admirable Sciences; but *the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, the Founder of our Christian Religion, is no less than the eternal Son of God, that came down from Heaven, left his Father's Bosom, emptied himself, and eclipsed his eternal Glory, to plant this Holy Religion here below, *to purifie himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works*, Tit. 2. 14. Now, if the good Fortune of a Lucky Inventor, if the great Wit and Study of a learned Philosopher, if the strict Rules and Methods of a rigid Ascetick can reflect so much Honour upon their Followers, as to look upon themselves on that account the Nobler and Happier: To what Heights and Elevations of Mind should our Souls be raised, whose Profession is of so Divine Original, the Au-

thor of whose Religion, is as far above *Aristotle* and *Plato*, *Zeno* and *Democritus*, as the eternal Wisdom of God is above the slight Sophisms and Conjectures in Philosophy.

3. If we look but upon the admirable Rules of our Holy Religion, by which it stands distinguished, both from the Law Natural and Judicial; we must needs have our Minds raised to a peculiar Degree of Greatness, as being thought worthy to be the Professors of so pure a Doctrine. How do the Philosophers in their Books, applaud their great Happiness, by having attained to the wise Rules and Precepts of Morality, that they by these were enabled to live like Men, whilst the greatest part of Mankind lived *more pecudum*, like Beasts in Stupidity and Sensuality? And yet the greatest Hights that their Philosophers could attain to, fell vastly short of those admirable Precepts, which are enjoined by our Blessed Saviour. To see in our Religion, a devout Saint denying his Affections, Crucifying his Flesh, and abridging himself, not only of Unlawful and Superfluous, but almost of necessary Enjoyments, to live with that Exactness, as expecting always to die, and to die with that Cheerfulness, as being to live for ever, to suffer Persecution and Torments, not only with tranquility and composedness of Mind, but e

I. Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 37

ven with Joy and Triumph, to resign up his innocent Breath, Praying for his Enemies and Persecutors, and blessing the very Hand which is the Author of his Ruine: This must needs make us applaud our Felicity in belonging to such a Religion, which can produce such blessed and admirable Effects, to despise all the little Arts of vain Philosophy, and to think the Rules thereof very imperfect and insufficient, which the great Proficients in it could little benefit by, but would leave the great Master himself oftentimes Proud and Revengeful, Ambitious and Luxurious, after all his mighty Declamations against Vice, and his Panegyricks upon Vertue

4. But more especially when we look upon the end of our Hopes, our eternal Reward, which is promised to us in another World; this is the most powerful Motive of all to this magnanimous Contempt of the World which we are speaking of. If Philosophy only could in a great measure effect this, which did propose no other Happiness but the Excellency and Reward of Vertue itself, and the Satisfaction it bred in a virtuous Mind: How ought our Souls to be transported and raised above themselves, and to think all things else nothing, when we consider the Vainness and Immenfensity of

those Joys? Indeed some Men have contributed by their Notions to lessen this Valuation of the Joys in another World, and have much slackned Mens Endeavours after this unexpressible Happiness, by asserting that it is too selfish a thing, to propound our being Happy hereafter, as the greatest Motive of our Obedience; but that it is the only Christian Rule to propose the Glory of God as the ultimate end of all our Actions. Nay, some have run so far, as to say, that Men stand obliged to glorifie God by their own endless Destruction, and that when they are predestinated to everlasting Misery, they ought not to repine, because God's Glory is manifested thereby. But this is a most unreasonable Mistake, than which, nothing can be more reflecting upon the Goodness of God, and more prejudicial to true Piety. For such Texts of Scripture as these, *Do all to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *that God in all things may be glorified*, 1 Pet. 4. 11. do not make God's Glory a distinct thing from our own Happiness, but are so far from engaging us, to the glorifying of God, without considering whether it be by our Happiness or Misery, that we are to make our own Happiness the end of all our Actions; because God is most Glorified by the Happiness of his Creatures. For to fancy that God Cre-  
ated

### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 39

ated us only to Glorifie and Praise him, would be a far greater Absurdity, and would rather make God Almighty a *Selfish* Being, to Create us only for his own Ends, to sing Halleluja's, and reflect his own Praises to him to all Eternity. This would be to impute the greatest Vanity imaginable to the Best and Wisest Being; but if we would think reasonably, and as we ought to do of God, we must think that he created us on purpose to do us Good, that he has implanted in us a Faculty, to desire above all things our own Happiness, and when we do attain that, God's Glory is thereby the most manifested. So that 'tis all one, whether we desire God's Glory, or our own Happiness, because God's Glory is shown in our being Happy.

But though we have all these Motives to raise in us this Magnanimity or Greatness of Soul, which a true Christian ought to have, yet we must take Care, whilst we are pursuing of this, that we do not fall into *Spiritual Pride*: For to Pride our selves in those Free Graces which God had given us, to impute them to our own Power and Endeavours, and to despise others, to whom God's Holy Spirit has been more sparing in his Influences, is so far from a true Christian Magnanimity, that it is a certain sign of a little and a narrow Soul. This is so far from

being a Christian Vertue, that it is the most Devilish Vice a Man can commit. It is the true and proper Sin of the Devil; for it was that which did principally occasion his Fall. But we must let this Vertue of ours appear by retaining the Greatest and Noblest Thoughts of God we possibly can, by truly considering the Excellency of our Religion, and the Gloriousness of its Rewards, by meditating upon the Nobleness of our Nature, and the Turpitude of Sin; by thinking upon God's Hatred to Vice, and his great Desire to have us like him; by weighing the Dignity of our Calling, and the inestimable Price of our Redemption; and then bravely to resolve never to do any thing unbecoming those, to whom God has vouchsafed so much Favour, never by a base Ingratitude to offend so great a Benefactor.

## S E C T. II.

*That a Contempt of the World does consist in being Content.*

A True Contempt of the World doth consist in arriving to a due Contentedness in whatsoever State of Life God shall think fit to place us. I do not take Content here in its largest Extent, so as to include  
such

### Chap.III. Contempt of the World. 41

such an universal Chearfulness of Mind, and ready Compliance with the Divine Pleasure, as to be content with the good things we enjoy, and withal, patient under the Pains and Calamities we suffer. But I shall restrain the Word to its narrower and more common signification, by which we understand, *such an Indifferency towards the State of Life we are to go through here, as not to be over concerned about the Possession of Riches, whether we have them or have them not.* For as for that part of Contentedness, which is conversant about the bearing of Pain, Sicknes, or other Calamities, I shall discourse of that under another Head, *viz. Of Patience.* Now it is plain, than no Man can be said to despise the World, that has an inordinate Desire for the Riches of it, that will not suffer himself to enjoy these Comforts which God has given him, by his impatient longing for more; that has such a hankering after the little Trifles of this World, Lands, Moneys, &c. that he durst not trust Providence with the Disposall of them, but will himself endeavour after them by unjust Means and Artifices, and distract himself with thoughts of enjoying them for the future, at the Expence of his present Quiet and Satisfaction. Now this must be so far from despising the World, that it is a perfect Idolizing of it; for as the Apostle teaches,

Cove-

*Covetousness is Idolatry*; and it is all one to let our Knees bow to Baal or Astaroth, or to say to Gold, thou art my Hope; or to fine Gold, thou art my Confidence, Job 31. 24. Therefore he that would arrive at a true Contempt of the World must take care,

*Not to trust in Riches.* I. Not to put his Trust and Confidence in the Riches which God has bestowed upon him. This is the Advice of the

Apostle, 1 Tim. 6. 17. Charge them that are rich in this World, that they trust not in uncertain Riches. I believe there are few Men in the World, who will own this Charge, because 'tis so easy to be convinced of the contrary; they know Ten thousand Pounds a Year will no sooner secure a Man from the Grave, than Ten Pounds; and that a Lord has no better Title to Heaven than a Beggar. They know that Riches will of themselves cure no Disease, though they may breed a Thousand; and that a Bag of Gold will afford no more Ease in a Fit of the Gout, than a Sack of Chaff. But yet it so happens for all this, that when Men are arrived to a great Degree of Wealth, they act as if their Money could do every thing, as if it could not only purchase them Pleasure and Honor, but even Immortality. For if such Men did not really trust in their Riches, Why should they neglect all the true Means of their future Happiness to acquire these?



these? Why should they beggar their Souls to improve their Estates? Why should they neglect God's Worship, and violate his Laws? Why should they defraud their Neighbour, nay, even their own Backs and Bellies, to gain an immeasurable quantity of their beloved Riches? If they did not really trust in these, Why should they behave themselves with that insupportable Haughtiness to Men of lower Fortunes; to look upon Men of little or no Estates, only as the Cattle or Vermine of the World, and to treat them as their Slaves and Vassals? For such a Temper as this is as far from a *Contempt of the World*, as Epicurism is from Abstemiousness and Mortification; and as inconsistent with it, as the true Worship of God is with the Service of *Mammon*. We ought, in Order to this Vertue, to look upon our Riches only as our *Viaticum*, to sustain us in our Journey to another World; to be very indifferent whether our Fare be so very much, or so very delicious or no, we need only take care that it be but enough to bring us thither. We must consider, that 'tis but a little time we can enjoy them, and therefore 'tis not worth ones while to set ones Heart upon that which we must so shortly part with; but that we ought rather to leave them with the same Readiness as a Man puts off his Riding Cloaths,

Cloaths, when he comes to his Journeys End. We see how sadly that poor Wretch was disappointed, who had other Thoughts of these things. *Luke 12. 19. Soul, says he, thou hast much Goods laid up for many years, take thy Ease, Eat, Drink, and be Merry.* He thought he was like to have a glorious time of it, he found he had Health to enjoy his Pleasures, and Pleasures to gratifie his Appetite; he fancied he could not Wish faster than he could Enjoy, and that his *Full Barns* would never leave his Desires empty. But alas! this jolly Scene of Imagination was quickly over-clouded by a Melancholly Message, *Thou Fool, this Night shall Soul be required of thee, Ver. 20.* The grim Aspect of the King of Terrors made his Thoughts a little more serious and rational, and put him in mind, that when he depended so much upon his Wealth, he did not consider the Accidents which might supervene. Indeed the Scripture may very well call this Man Fool, for this fond Presumption of Living to enjoy his Goods; but this Man would have enjoyed his Goods if he had lived, which was some small Degree of Wisdom; but as for those who yet depend upon their Riches, and yet never can have the Heart to enjoy them, they do much better, I am sure, deserve that Compellation.

## Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 45

2. For a true Contempt of the World, it is necessary we should *Not to fear the Loss of Riches.*  
*not be over-concerned with the Fear of the Loss of the good things we possess.* If we cast our Eyes round about us, we shall see a great part of the World make themselves miserable only with the Fears of being so. They live well and happy enough at present, and find they have an Affluence of every thing that is good and comfortable; but they are so distracted for fear they should be deprived of these Comforts, that whilst they have them, they are never able to enjoy them. They are startled at every unusual Accident, for fear it should contribute to their Detriment; they are so full of distracting Caution in every thing they do, lest they should by any ways be circumvented or outwitted; they can never sleep without having taken a View of that which is almost impossible to be missing, and are apt to frame the Noise even of innocent Vermin into the Trampling of Assassins and Robbers. Now though these unhappy Men do enjoy little enough of the World, yet they are very far from a Contempt of it; they have a great Love and Hankering after it, but put off the Enjoyment so from time to time, till they are dropt into the Grave without ever tasting any of its Pleasures. But they ought rather to enjoy the good Things which God has  
given

given them with Thankfulness, and to leave the Security of them for the future to the disposal of his alwise Providence; if he thinks it good for us, we shall enjoy them still, and if he does deprive us of them, it will be for our Better. For although we had never so much reason to suspect our future Condition to be good, yet it would be very foolish to let our Cares for the Future to spoil all our Enjoyments for the present, because this would make our Life all of a piece, and set our flourishing Condition on a Level with our Unfortunate; this would be to anticipate our Misery, and make us feel more in imagination beforehand, than in Experience when it comes. But 'tis extream Madne's to part with those certain Pleasures we may possess, out of Fear of an uncertain Deprivation of them. This is as wise a Project, as for a Man to give away his Estate for fear of losing it by Law; or to burn his House, to prevent Dilapidations. Such Men, though for their own Ease and Quiet only, should take notice of that excellent Advice of our Blessed Saviour: *Take no thought for the Morrow, for the Morrow shall take thought for the things of it self; sufficient for the day is the Evil thereof,* Mat. 6. 34. That is, enjoy the good Things with thankfulness, which by Gods Favour thou standest possessed of to day, and disquiet  
not

Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 47

not thy self by anxious Thoughts and Distractions about the future ; every, the most happy Day, has Trouble enough of it self ; therefore add not to the Disquietude of that which has but too much already.

3. If we would rightly contemn the World, *We should not overmuch grieve at the Loss of our Riches.* *Not to grieve at the Loss of Riches.* Grief or Sorrow being a Natural Passion arising from the Loss of *some Good*, and is therefore implanted in us, to give us us some Disquiet and Dissatisfaction upon the Loss of such Good, on purpose to make us more Circumspect and Cautious in retaining what is *Good* for us, and avoiding that which is *Evil*. So that this Passion of *Sorrow* must needs be indifferent in it self, as all natural Affections are ; but must become Evil, only upon account of its Object, its Excess, or the like. So that if we Sorrow for that which we ought not to Sorrow for, or longer than we ought, our Grief then becomes Criminal. Now there are some things, the Loss of which is so trivial, that it would argue a most ridiculous Folly, to shew any, the least degree of Sorrow for. For we should think a Man little better than Mad, that would sit down in a melancholy and dejected Mood for the falling of a Hair from his Head, or a Tile from his House : And so proportionably in the Degree of Sorrow.

We

We should not think that Man in a much better Condition, who should grieve as much for the Loss of a Horse, as for the Death of his Son and Heir. Indeed a Man should not be insensible under any great Losses, because no wise Man can think it a thing indifferent, whether one lives at ones own Cost, or begs a Sustenance at other Mens Hands; but a Man should take care not to be so dejected at the Loss of an Estate, or a Sum of Money, as if he had lost his Reason, or his Soul. I do not commend *Crates* for a Man of great Reason, for tumbling all his Wealth into the Sea himself; but I think that Man has less, who by excessive Grief for a Loss at Sea, will venture growing Mad for it. For no Man possesses any thing of such a mighty Value in this World, as should give occasion to him of intemperate Grief: A few Reflections will furnish him with Philosophy enough to sustain the greatest Loss that can befall him. If a Man should lose all that he has, that *All* would be but a *Totum Nil*, a whole Nothing, in respect of the Joys of Heaven, which he hopes in a short time to be Partaker of. And yet generally most Men possess more than they have lost; which should in all reason breed more of Comfort, than the other does of Discontent. And therefore *Aristippus* said very wisely to one who

### Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 49

who came to condole with him for the Loss of his Farm: *You have, Sir, but one Farm, and I have three still, Why should not I rather Condole with you.* Sometimes our Losses may be but the Divine Scourges for our Sins, in order to make us better, and then we may be as well sorry for our Physick which we take to make us well. Sometimes one Loss is compensated with a greater Gain, which otherways would have been impossible; it may put Men upon new, and more successful Projects, improve their Caution for the future, and double their Diligence. The famous *Zeno* got his Philosophical Knowledge by a Shipwrack of all he had; for he was (as he reported) by that Accident, drove into the Harbor of *Philosophy*, which was (says he) a very prosperous Voyage. A Man's Loss sometimes may prove for his Ease and Quiet, his Estate might before have been too cumbersome, and have bred him more Torment than Satisfaction, which is most certainly so in all Men, who love Quiet and Retirement. Poor *Anatreon*, when *Polycrates* had given him Five Talents, he being a Poet, and not used much to Money, could not sleep for two whole Nights together, for thinking how to lock it up, or how to place it out safely; and thus, growing quickly weary of the Miser's Trade, comes Back to his Benefactor,

E

and

and desires him to take his Gift again, for it cost him more Care to keep it than it was worth. But we Christians have rather reason to bless God, for delivering us from a great deal of our Incumbrance; that he has discharged us of some part of our Stewardship; that by leaving us less, he has left our Accounts the easier to be made up. These and the like Considerations being improved in our Minds, and seriously laid to Heart, will make us bear any the greatest Loss with a due Christian Content, and Resignation to the Divine Pleasure; and will enable us to cry, with Holy Job, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the Name of the Lord.* By this we shall be enabled to follow the Example of those pious Christians, which the Author to the *Hebrews* commends, *Heb. 10.34 Who took joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods, knowing in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and enduring Substance.*

Not to repine  
at Poverty.

4. Not to repine, if God has placed us in low and mean Circumstances in the World. A Man cannot be said to despise the World, though he can enjoy never so little of it, that is always murmuring at Providence, because it has not afforded him a greater Share of those good things which he sees other Men enjoy. And this Temper is as unreasonable as the foregoing one, because by this they both



Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 51

both forfeit the Pleasures of their respective Conditions ; the one loses all the Enjoyment of a plentiful Estate out of fear of becoming Poor, and the other loses all the Satisfaction of Poverty, out of Vexation for not being Rich. There is no Condition in this World so valuable, as to grieve a Wise Man, because he does not enjoy it, and there is no Condition so miserable, but he may find enough Satisfaction of in it, to keep him from Repining and Grudging at other Mens Felicity. He considers that the World is but a great Stage for Men to act their Parts in, and what cares he which Part comes to his Lot ; for he knows if he acts the Peasant or the Beggar, he may have as much Applause, and as great a Reward as by Personating an Emperor. He considers that he ought in Gratitude to thank God for the present Things he doth enjoy ; but 'tis the greatest Impudence to quarrel with him, because he does not afford him more, when he had not the least Pretence to what he has afforded him already. He thinks rather how miserable he should have been, had he wanted the good Things now in his Possession ; not how happy he should be in acquiring others. And this truly is enough to keep the Poor Man from Murmuring : He enjoys not only Life and Being, and other the more universal Benefits

of Providence, but Health, Security, and many other Enjoyments, which Rich Men en-  
the Poor Man enjoys, or would part with all  
vyat, and sometimes. A great Estate will  
not make a Man live longer than a small  
one; nay, where one has been starved to  
Death with not having enough to subsist up-  
on; Ten thousand have killed themselves,  
and shortned their Days by Surfeiting upon  
too much. The Sun shines as gloriously up-  
on the Cottage as the Palace, and the Moon  
lends as bright a Ray to the Poor Man's Cart,  
as to the King's Coach. The Rains bestow  
as fatning a Moisture upon the poor Alms-  
man's little Plot, as upon the Gardens of *Cesar*;  
and the Winds breath as delicious Breezes  
upon the Travelling Beggar, as upon the  
Triumphing Monarch. These are the ordi-  
nary and common Benefits of Poverty, which  
make it not to be despised and undervalued;  
but there are others which make it to be e-  
ven wished for, and envied at. What would  
the crazy Voluptuary give for the poor Man's  
Athletick Constitution? though he rolls  
upon a Bed of Down, What would he give  
for the *Sleep of the Labouring Man*, which is  
*sweet, whether he eat little or much?* Eccl. 5. 10.  
What would he part with for his Edge of Ap-  
petite, that makes his savory Food go down  
with such a Gust and Relish, as gives him  
more

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 53

more Satisfaction than the other receives from all his Studied Delicacies? How would he, who has run through half the Diseases of the Bills of Mortality, be willing to change Conditions with him who hardly ever knows a Disease, until it carries him thither, where he is like to know no more? I am confident many a Rich and Powerful Favorite in Princes Courts (who seemed to Men of mean Estate the greatest Object of Envy) when he has found himself falling into Disgrace, and tumbling downwards faster than he ascended, when he has been surrounded with Dangers and Accusations from his Adversaries; such a great Man has thought the poorest Tenant in any of his Mannors, to be a happier Man than he; that could live without Danger from malicious Enemies, and the Practices of undermining Adversaries. For the Poor Man has no need to fear any of these frightful Calamities, which are so wont to terrifie the Rich. Let what will Convulsions and Revolutions of State happen, he is sure he is low enough to have all those Storms pass over his Head; he is not in fear of losing that which is worth no ones taking up; he knows that it is only the Wealth and Possessions of the Rich that must glut the Victor's Avarice. And truly this one Consideration makes the Poor Man alone hearty and cheary,

when all other Mens Faces are clouded with Fears and Distractions. I do not urge this to prove that Poverty is the happiest Condition of Life, or to make Men espouse a Voluntary Poverty; but only to shew that God has so tempered the Conditions of Life, that in the meanest State of it, we may find many things, which not only may keep us from repining, but which may be improved to a considerable Degree of Happiness.

*Nor desire the* 5. To come up to a Contempt  
*greatest Plenty.* of the World, *We ought not eagerly*  
*to desire Great Riches:* For such Men are the very Slaves and Vassals of it, that are always digging in its Mines, who are still Sweating and Toiling for that Oar which others must at last enjoy. Now it is not every endeavouring to raise an Estate which is thus reprehensible; but only such an impetuous Desire, and such an unintermitted Pursuit after Riches, as renders us indisposed and incapable to perform our other Duties which are incumbent upon us. I doubt not but that a Man whom God has placed in a successful way of Thriving, may as lawfully improve his Estate, as he may enlarge his House or Garden: For unless the Purchasing Estates was allowed as a Reward to Vertue and Industry, all the Riches and good Things which the World affords, would always run in one Channel, and serve only

### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 55

only to pamper, it may be, the foolish and lazy Progeny of some few wealthy Forefathers, who have entailed Money upon them without Sense or Honesty ; whilst all the brave Men that have defended their Religion and Country, and have instructed the World by useful Inventions, by noble and profitable Sciences, must be for ever condemned to Feed upon the Crumbs which fall from their Table, and be always content to subsist upon the Parings of their Estates. All the Fault lies, when Men make the Getting of Money their chiefest Aim ; when their Thoughts are set upon nothing else ; when they sacrifice all their other Interests, their Credit and Reputation, their Bodies and Souls, only to obtain a great Estate ; when they neglect the Worship of God for the Service of *Mammon* ; when they are cruel and unmerciful, and suffer the Chink of their Money to drown the Cry of the Poor. I distinguish here the Covetous Man from the Oppressor, who raises an Estate by Wrong and Robbery, by Cheating Orphans and Widows, and other less circumspect People ; for a Man may be wicked enough of all Conscience in raising an Estate, and yet never be guilty of what we generally call Dishonesty or Knavery. For that earthliness of Mind, that Sordidness of Temper, that unmerciful

Bowelless Disposition of Soul, that Defraudation of the Poor of those good Things which are deposited in their Hands as Stewards for them, that Idolizing of Riches, that Neglect of Religion, and Contempt of Heavenly Things will to all Intents and Purposes, as effectually Damn a Man, as the other grosser Acts of Fraud and Injustice. I observe there are two sorts of Persons called Fools in Scripture, the Atheist, and the Covetous Man; the one, because in Contradiction to all Experience, he believes no God at all; and the other, because he has made the silliest Choice of a God imaginable, has placed for the Object of his Worship a little senseless perishing Money. I shall not now dispute the Point which is the greatest Fool of the two; but however, one would think that the Atheist doth bid fairer for Sense, who would rather own no God at all, than such a vile and contemptible one as the Covetous Man worships. And indeed, if we except Swearing, there is not a more unreasonable Sin in the World than Covetousness is; because a Man proposes no tolerable and accountable end in following that Vice. He takes up with other Vices, in hopes to enjoy the Satisfaction of them; but Covetousness can never endure to hear of any such thing as Enjoyment; for to enjoy an  
Estate,

### Chap.III. Contempt of the World. 57

Estate, to such a Man, is as great a Grief, as not to have it ; he spends all his Lifetime in Sweat and Toil, and undergoes all the Care and Trouble of Riches, that somebody else after him may enjoy the Pleasure of them ; which made one say very well, *That a Covetous Man does nothing well but when he dies.* Other Vices are quiet and still when they are gratified ; but this cries out for more, the more you give it. When a Man has got Ten thousand Pound by Covetousness, he is more Covetous than when he was worth but One hundred Pound ; for such a ones Desire is only his Disease, and therefore the Covetous Man is compared to one in a Dropsie ; for the greatest Accessions which he can hope for, will be so far from satisfying him, that they tend to nothing else, but only to augment his Thirst. But let such a one consider how this Vice doth expose him to the Scorn of all sensible Men, for acting so contrary to all Sense and Reason, by thus starving himself, only to Pamper he knows not who after him. Let a Man's Estate be either great or small, Covetousness is the foolishhest Project a Man can take up with. If a Man be Poor, when he is resolved for Covetousness, that will not mend his Condition, but will keep him Poor still ;

*Publius Syrus  
Avarus nihil recte facit nisi cum moritur.*

still; he may in time, 'tis true, get more Baggs into his Coffer, but will be no better for them, than if he still was not worth one Farthing. But if a Man be Rich, and yet be Covetous, it is as unnatural, as to Eat when a Man's Belly is full already; he may lay on a greater Load, but he cannot digest it, and it will be so far from Nourishing him, that it will serve only to make him Sick: For men are much mistaken if they think Happiness does consist in having a great Estate, though they had a Heart to use it, as few Covetous Men have; for all that Men of the most exorbitant Revenues can enjoy, is felt with greater Pleasure by a Man of but a moderate Fortune: Such a one is array'd decently with Cloths that are better apt to defend him from the Injuries of the Weather, and yet not make him walk abroad in fear of being Robb'd. He has enough about him to perform all useful and necessary Offices, and is not troubled with a multitude of unruly Servants, who generally give a Man more Vexation than they do him Service, and has his Work better done by those few he maintains, than by a great many, who shift their Duty off from one to another, and at last leave it undone. He has five times more Freedom with that his Mediocrity, than the others have with all their Greatness; whose  
pompous



### Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 59

pompous Equipage is only a Clog to them; for a Man had as good go abroad with a Keeper as with a multitude of Attendants; because such an one is a Prisoner within his own House, till his Servants are ready to conduct him out. His Table is furnished with sufficient, and more wholesome Food, and his time of Eating is more at his own Command, tho' the other may have the Advantage of being oftner surfeited, and making his Stomach stay for the Solemnity of his Entertainment. And upon this Account it was that *Aristippus* the Philosopher, handsomly compared a great Estate to a Pair of Shoes which are too big, that can serve to no other purpose but to make a Man stumble. For certainly a wise Man would rather desire a Fortune that would just fit him, than such a large one which is more cumbersome than convenient. Now for these Reasons, Covetousness would be an unaccountable thing, though a Man should purchase a great Estate by it, and enjoy it when he had done; but not one covetous Man in Five thousand is so wise as to enjoy what he has got; he still keeps his Belly lank, that his Baggs may swell, and punishes his own Body, to pamper his Heirs. Such an one *Solomon* well describes, *Ecc. 6. 2.* *A Man to whom God has given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his Soul*

*Soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not Power to eat thereof.* He starves in the midst of his Affluence, heaps up Riches so long, till he is really Poor, and as if he was running backwards in a Ring, he flies from Poverty so far back, till he runs upon that which he first avoided.

But it may be said, Why should Covetousness be so foul a Crime, it does no harm to any Body else, a Man thereby only forbears those things which he might enjoy, which is an Injury to no one but himself; besides, Prudence engages us to take care for the future; and the Apostle says, *He that provides not for those of his own House, is worse than an Infidel.* To which I answer, 1. That a Man ought not to tyrannize over his own Body, any more than he ought to murder himself; as he has not such a Power over himself, as to destroy his Body, so neither ought he to defraud it of those Necessary Refreshments which God has ordered us to allow it; unless it be upon a Religious Account, in order to subject it the better to the Soul. Therefore he that Starves his Belly to increase his Estate, is in a lesser degree *Felo de se*, he feloniously robs his Body of those Enjoyments which our bountiful Creator has provided for it. 2. The Covetous Man injures the Publick, either in letting that  
Money

### Chap.III. Contempt of the World. 61

Money lye useleſs by, which ought to be current for the Benefit of the Community, or by a penurious way of Living, which no ways contribute to the Circulation of Trade, which is the Sinews of all Society, and the Livelihood of the far greater Part of all Nations; by generally oppreſſing the Neceſſitous with extravagant Uſe and extortive Payments: Or *Laſtly*, By defrauding other Poor Men of the Alms and Benefactions they have a Title to. 3. Neither ought we to be ſo ſollicitous for the Future, as not to enjoy the Preſent. We ought to commit all future Events to God's Diſpoſal, who will provide for us as is moſt fit. He who could feed the *Israelites* with Bread from Heaven, and *Eliſha* by Ravens, will moſt certainly never let us want what is fitting for us. Which admirable Leſſon we are taught by our Bleſſed Saviour, *Mat. 6. 31, 32. Therefore take no Thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? For after all theſe things the Gentiles ſeek, for your Heavenly Father knoweth you have need of all theſe things.* 4. As for that Saying of St. Paul, *1 Tim. 5. 8.* by thoſe *οἰκείοις*, or Perſons of our own Houſe, are meant thoſe of our Family, which are already fell into Neceſſity, who having rich Relations that can maintain them: The Apoſtle ſays, it is a Shame that they

they should be maintained by the Church at her Charge; for by that means those Christian Kindred would shew themselves worse than the Infidels. He does in no ways encourage those miserly Fathers, who pine their Body, and barter away their Souls, to leave their Sons Wealthy. But although the Apostle should urge it as a Duty of Parents to lay up a competent Maintenance for their Children to subsist upon, when they are dead, which indeed is their Duty when they are placed in a thriving way of Living; yet the Miser can from thence draw no Excuse for his Sin. For he endeavours to provide for their Luxury, rather than their Maintenance; and by his griping Avarice, entails such a Curse upon them, as will sooner make them miscarry than prosper in the World.

## S E C T. III.

*That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Temperate.*

**I** Do not take Temperance here in that large extent in which the School-men and many Writers of Ethick Books do, when they make it a Cardinal Vertue, and therefore must render it as comprehensive as they can, to take in the other Vertues under it; for they make

make Temperance to consist in the Moderation of all those things, which are in their Phrase, *maxime allicientia*, which do very much tempt a Man, whither they be Pleasures of the Mind or the Body; so that in this Acceptation, not only Corporal Pleasures, but also the Passions of the Soul, such as Anger and Revenge, are the Object of Temperance too. But I shall take it in that Sense, which *Aristotle*, in the Third Book of his *Ethicks* doth, where he defines Temperance to be a *Mediocrity about the Pleasures of the Body*, that is, a moderate Use of them. So that a Man may be in some measure intemperate by immoderate using any of these Pleasures, which are convey'd by any of his Senses; by an extravagant Delight in hearing Musick, by looking upon fine Prospects and Pictures, and by smelling delicious Perfumes, as well as by Whoring or Drinking. But because the two other Senses are more strong and untamable, they meet with more Occasions, and have more violent Temptations to invite Men to their Pleasures; 'tis the Business chiefly of Temperance, to moderate the Use of Pleasures arising from them. In the Moderation therefore of these Pleasures, Temperance becomes a threefold Vertue, and branches it self into,

1. *Abstinence.*
2. *Sobriety.*
3. *Chastity.*

*By the Practice  
of Abstinence.*

These three Vertues, next to the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, are the strongest Defence against the greatest Shocks the World and the Devil can make upon us ; for those Pleasures, which it is their Province to govern, are as it were their *Grand Artillery*, whilst other Temptations are but their *Small Shot* ; with those they make only their little *Attacks* upon us, but with these they even *Storm* our Innocence. Therefore he that does in any measure pretend to *Contemn the World*, must be sure to subdue those Pleasures by the constant practice of these Vertues ; for these are so essential to all Religion, that there is no pretending to it without them ; we may be excused perhaps from some other Vertues, because they are not altogether so intelligible ; but these are such plain Dictates of our Understanding, that there is no Pleading against them : Other Vices may not be so dangerous to retain, but *Gluttony*, *Drunkenness* and *Whordom*, will most certainly sink a Man to the bottom of Hell, nor will all the other Vertues he possesses serve to bear him up ;

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 65

up ; to eradicate other Vices, and to cherish these, is to be plaistering our *Finger* for a Scratch, whilst we neglect a Distemper which is preying upon our very *Vitals* ; 'tis like beautifying our *Frontiers* and *Out-works*, whilst we let the Enemy lie Ravageing in the *Heart* of our Country. He therefore that would arrive to a Contempt of the World, must take care to be diligent in the Practice of *Abstinence* ; which is shewn,

First, *In not eating overmuch of our ordinary Food.* By overmuch, must

*Not to eat too much.*

not be meant any quantity of Meat particularly determined ; so that each Man must eat Fifteen or Twenty Ounces at a time, and he that eats more is Intemperate : For as the Moralists say, it is not an

\* Arithmetical, but a Geometrical Proportion, which we are to square our Actions by ; that is, in the

\* Aristotle says very well, that the Medium in which Virtue doth consist, doth not lye as the Medium in an Arithmetical Proportion, equally distant from both Ex-

trems ; as in 1, 2, 3, whereof 2 is equally distant from both Extremes, because 3 is as much above 2, as 1 is under it ; but as in a Geometrical Proportion, viz. 4. 8. 16. where the middle Number 8 comes nearer in value to 4 than to 16 ; so are we to set out the Mean of Virtue nearer or farther from the Extremes, as Prudence shall direct. At for instance, Suppose three Pound of Meat be too much for any Man to eat, and one Pound too little, we must not therefore take the Middle, and oblige every Man to eat two Pound ; but must leave every Man to use a Prudential Mean, to let the strongest Constitutions come the nearest to three, and the weakest to one.

present Case; the Bounds of Temperance in different Men are different; one Man of a very Hail Constitution, whose Blood moves on rapidly in his Veins, and does daily boil off a great Part of its self by its agil Motion, or one whose Labour does weary him by continual Consumption of his Spirits, hath greater need of a Supply from a larger quantity of Nourishment; than the cold Phlegmatick, whose Pulse hardly creeps within him, or those unactive or idle People, who scarce ever stir all the Week from their Bed or their Chair. Nor should any Man oblige himself to set Rules as to the quantity he is to eat, because as our Health varies, we may eat more or less; and because these Whimfies of *Lessian* Diets, of weighing of Meats and Drinks, to be eat at such times, at such a distance from Sleep and another Meal, seem always to have in them more of the *Spleen* than either *Prudence* or *Religion*. Every Man's own Reason will direct him how to avoid Excess of Eating, as well as any *Casnist* or *Vertuoso* of them all, and to follow *Nature* in Eating when a Man is an Hungry, and in Drinking when he is adry, and not to Repletion, and to an Overcharging her; is far more wholesome and friendly, than all the little Rules of nice Art and Pedantry. But to eat Gluttonously, more than Nature does require



### Cap.III. Contempt of the World. 67

require, and more than she can digest ; to use Arts to provoke an extraordinary Appetite, and to increase the Pleasure of Eating ; to use Decoctions to eat a great deal, and and strong Drinks to digest it ; are Actions so filthily scandalous, that all Mankind are agreed to fix the most detestable Infamy upon them. All Vices are really scandalous and reproachful, or at least ought to be so ; but this appears to all Men, to have something more of Ugliness than the rest : for many Men have arrived to such an Impudence in Vice, to such a *Glorying in their Shame*, that they have openly avowed themselves guilty of *Whordom* and *Drunkennes*, *Murder* and *Revenge* ; but I never yet knew a Man that had Face enough to profess himself a *Glutton*. This is a Vice so perfectly Brutish, that a Man not only disparages, but even dethrones his Reason in submitting to it, by putting that Noble Faculty upon such vile Offices, as being a Slave and a Pander to his Belly. Many other Vices will suffer Men to prosecute their Calling and them together, they may be very Vitious, and withall very Industrious ; but this Vice nails down their Hands to their Pockets, makes *Work* as uncomfortable to them as *Fasting* ; it makes their Business go on with that slowness and heaviness, as if every Motion of

their Hand went to their very Heart; they have learned to Labour so much at their Meat, that they Freeze at their Work. I might add, that this Vice does incapacitate Men from all Acts of Prayer and Devotion, and all other Religious Exercises; it fills the Soul with Carnal Idea's, makes every thing of a Spiritual Nature as easie to be seen by their Eyes as their Understanding; the Fumes from their Stomach do so overcloud their Brain, that they would quickly flag the Wings of their Devotion, whenever they should attempt it; nor can we well suppose that those refined Thoughts of Prayer and Contemplation should be ever found in such Minds which are hardly able to think at all. But I need not much urge this to those that can condescend to so filthy and so beastly a Sin; for they know but little what Devotion is, or concern themselves but little about it. But however, such Men may consider lastly, that *Health* is a thing worthy their Consideration, that a Man should not eat too much, because he should not be Sick too often; that their Excess of Eating will in time dull the edge of their Appetite; that it will be the Parent of many Diseases, which will very much lessen their beloved Pleasure, or will bring on Death, which will make it cease to be at all; that it is better for them to be

thrifty

III Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 69

thrifty of their darling Enjoyment only to make it hold out the longer ; that it is but an ill Bargain to linger out an Old Age in the Extremitities of the Gout or Chollick, for a few Surfeiting Meals when they are young ; or for the sake of this ugly piece of Sensuality, to lose Twenty or Thirty Years out of their Life.

Secondly, *Not to make our constant Food upon the most delicious Meats.* I *Not too Deliciously.*

do not mean hereby that all Persons of the best Quality, should feed upon as hard Fare as the Poorest, or that others, upon set Occasions of Rejoycing, should not provide themselves a more dainty and splendid Provision. For God has provided these good things, which chiefly furnish out the most sumptuous Tables, on purpose to be enjoy'd, and has made them but rare, because they should not be enjoyed too often ; and he is so far from forbidding Feasting, he did command many of them to his People the *Jews*, and his own Eternal Son has honored a

\* Marriage Feast with his own Presence. But to make it ones Business every day to furnish a Table with variety of Dainties, to rack ones Brain for studied and elaborate Delicacies, to set our Heads at work only for our Bellies, to be more at a Loss

for Sauces and new ways of Dressing, than for Food ; to let our Fancies hanker after every thing that is rare and costly, and to frame our Palats to relish nothing but what is prodigiously expensive ; this is to proclaim our selves such soft and sensual Creatures, as not to deserve the Name of Men. One can hardly with Patience read the Book of *Horace* and *Juvenal*, *Lucan* and *Perfius*, *Petronius*, *Seneca*, *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*, where we find the great *Romans* taxed with this intolerable Luxury ; to see how that noble People, which had formerly been famous for the most exalted Vertue, was then sunk into the lowest Dregs of this Dissoluteness and Sensuality ? Who can, without Indignation, as at an Affront offered to Human Nature, read of such Wretches as *Caligula*, *Domitian*, and *Heliogabalus*, to find them sending Senators into the East to fetch home Fish and Fowl, and calling a Senate to consult how to dish out a great Fish ; to see them rolling in Baths of flowing Nard, dissolving Jewels worth a Million of our Money, and drinking them off to a Whores Health ? I cannot say we have any so Luxurious in our Time, because we have none that are Masters of so great Riches ; but if we may make an Estimate of what they would do in such a Fortune, from the Vanity they shew in their present one, I

### Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 71

am affraid, many, not only in the Court, but in the City too, both Men and Women, would outdo any *Cleopatra, Caligula, or Helio- gabalus* of them all. But to what purpose should a Man study so much to please his Palat, when he may Dine better upon the first Dish that offers it self? Nature it self is content and better satisfied with that which is most simple and readiest at hand; and if we will take a

\* Great Man's Word, *What our own Grounds and Barn-doors afford us are not only more wholesome, but more palatable to all impartial Men; but as for Kitchen Compositions, Ragoos, Out works, &c.* he tells us, *they ought to pass with us for a sort of Poison.* Nay, what, not, only an Irreligious, but what a silly Project is it, to lay out so much Pains, and be at such Expence, only to make our selves Sick; to use so much Art and Design to tempt our Palat to Gluttony, which of it self is inclined to Temperance; by a great deal of Charge, to sweeten that, which, after we are satisfied, would otherways go down like the most nauseous Potion; and which will generally make us but Sick at last? This is so shameful a Practice, that by this we do not only become Brutes, but we outgo them in their own Kind, by how much the more

\* Monsieur Euremont in his Letter to Monsieur D'Olonne.

our Reason furnishes us with those Artificial Methods of Gluttony which they want; and so enables us to become the greater Beasts of the two.

*Not Meats over-nourishing.*

Thirdly, *Not to make our constant Feed upon things which supply extraordinary Nourishment.*

Our Nature is of it self inclinable enough to Evil, and the Devil takes sufficient Advantage of our Health alone, to tempt us to unlawful Thoughts and Actions. But 'tis a sign that some Men desire to be more wicked than the Devil wishes them to be, when they turn Tempters to themselves, by choosing such Food which will do his Business effectually, and save him the Labour. The Ancients, in the more dissolute Times, were Lewd enough of all Conscience, but they generally trusted to a vigorous Stock of Nature for it; but to the Shame of our Days, we aspire to their Wickedness, and yet must trust to Art to effect it: We have all the Will to be as Lewd as they, but we want the Ability. But if neither Religion, nor Grace, nor any pious Principle will work upon such People, yet the Consideration that it debilitates their Constitution, and lessens their natural Flame by overmuch Fuel; that it casts an infamous Reproach upon their Nature

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 73

ture, to let the World know it stands in need of such Helps; methinks this, if nothing else, should engage them to a more wise and temperate Practice.

Fourthly, *To be diligent in observing the Duty of Fasting.* This Part of Abstinence was a Duty which the Heathens were not acquainted with, to set aside a Day of Fasting upon a Religious Account. But it is a Duty which we Christians are strictly obliged to, by the Command of our Blessed Saviour, who gives us \* Rules for Fasting, and was himself a most remarkable Example for it, by Fasting Forty Days in the Wilderness: We have the Practice of the Apostles to enforce it, whom we often find in the *Acts* Fasting and Praying, and the Example of pious Christians throughout all Ages of the Church. But the Use of this Duty to all pious Christians is unspeakable. It serves to calm our Passions when they grow fiery and untameable; it curbs our Affections, and makes them easily manageable when they would be extorting the Reins from us; it makes our Minds quiet and sedate, clear and perceptive, and apt for Contemplation and Spiritual Exercises; it improves our Zeal, and animates our Petitions, sets our Souls upon the Flight, and

*Not to omit Fasting.*

\* *Mat. 6.  
Mar. 2.  
Luk. 5.*

and makes our Devotions all Life, and Wing and Spirit. Ask but the devout Christian what difference he finds between his ordinary Devotions, and those upon his Days of Fasting and Humiliation, and he will tell you as much as between Life and Death, between a Body and a Carcase: There is so much Warmth, and Vigor, and Alacrity in the one, and so much Coldness and Lumpishness in the other; which must make all good Men lament, as a sign of the Irreligiosity of this Age, that this Duty of Fasting is so strangely neglected; when the Publick Fasts, which are backed with particular Authority, are observed for the most part out of Fear only; when the Weekly Fasts of the Church, and the others at the more Solemn Times, by the far greatest part of the Nation, are not in the least distinguished from other Days; and by most of the rest by only Eating a Dish of Fish upon them. For this Reason, I am sure the Papists, who make no very good Use of Fasting neither, do very much, and not without some Reason, exclaim against us of the Church of *England*, for such an horrible Neglect of so Christian a Duty.

*Sobriety.*



Of Sobriety.

The Second Branch of Temperance is *Sobriety*, which is a *Temperance observed in Drinking*, as Abstinence was in Eating. Therefore to be sure every one that would condemn the World, must be perfect in the Rules of Sobriety, and wholly avoid the foul Sin of Drunkenness; which the Apostle tells us expressly, doth disinherit us of the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 10. Now, to the Compleat Practice of Sobriety, it is requisite,

First, *That a Man should not Drink to Intemperance, or to the Loss of his Reason.* And truly, upon this Account, all Men should be afraid of strong Drink, because it has that effect upon them, as to deprive them for a time of the Noblest Faculty they enjoy, because it makes a kind of an *inter regnum* in them, when the Man is for some time deposed, and the Brute usurps the Throne. It was a mighty pretty Answer of young Cyrus in *Xenophon*, who being asked by his Grand-father to drink some Wine; No Grand-father, says he, *I will not, because you put Poyson in it, for your Friends which were lately here upon your Birth-day, drank of it, and they*

Not to be  
Drunk.

*they all lost their Senses.* And indeed it would make any one wonder what Charms there should be in Drunkenness, that should recommend it so much to the World. When we consider what Fools and Sots it makes of Men, to be the Sport of their own Company; and the Diversion of the Children in the Streets; that it makes them sick after every Debauch, and breaks their Constitution after many; that it discloses their Secrets, and makes them often for ever repent of what they then discover; that it animates Men into Quarrels, arms them with Rage and Fury, and oftentimes makes the dearest Friends Murtherers to one another; that it foolishly squanders away a Man's Time, makes him lose his Trade, or neglect his Business; that it oftentimes Beggars his Family, stupifies his Senses, and at last damns his Soul: I say, to consider all this, a Man may be as soon in Love with Halts and Gibbets, with Daggers and Poison, as with so abominable and pestilential a Vice. I know 'tis usually said that good Company puts them upon it, for no Man will own to be Drunk for the Pleasure of Drinking. But why should Company make a Man Drink to excess more than to Eat to excess? Why should not I be obliged to eat Slices of Beef with a Man of a bigger Stomach, as well as to drink

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 77

drink the same Quantity with a Man of a stronger Head? Is a Man ever the better Company for being Drunk? Nay, generally, does not one drunken Man spoil a great deal of good Company? A Man indeed may talk with more Noise, but never with more Wit for being Drunk; and if ever a good Thing be said in a Company of Drunkards, it is whilst they be yet Sober. 'Tis Nonsense to say we cannot be so Rude to part with our Company, for it is time to part with them who have resolved to part with all Sobriety and good Sense. Besides the Civility of the Age will hardly allow Men to lay too great a Restraint upon any one; and let a Man but establish himself a Character of Sobriety, and the very Awe of his Vertue will keep the most impudent Drunkard from being too pressing and importunate: so that in short, no Man can be obliged to be Drunk, unless he has a Mind to be so; and that is a thing so horrible scandalous, that few Men will care to own, and therefore I am sure no Man ought to practise.

Secondly, *That he should not encourage Drinking till others are Drunk,* though he be able to hold out longer. A Man may be Sot and Drunkard enough of all Conscience,

*Not to make others so.*

science, and yet may possibly be never down right Drunk in all his Life. His Head may be of that strength, as to secure his Reason, whilst that of all the Company lies drowned in their Liquor. But certainly this victorious Drunkard is not one jot more innocent than the others. The Scripture pronounces a Woe, not only against those that are actually Drunk, but against *them, that are mighty to drink Wine, and men of strength to mingle strong Drink*, Isa. 5. 22. As for the Drunkards of the shallower Head, by their Sickness after a Debauch, and the Shame of it, they are kept from Drinking altogether so often; but the Triumphant Drunkard has no Restraint upon him, for his constant Successes do animate and encourage him continually on to fresh Conquests. Indeed Drunkards of all sorts are equal in their Crime, as to their foolish lavishing away their Time, and spoiling God's Creatures, as to their wastfully spending their Money, and neglecting their Business; but the strongheaded Drunkard is generally the more Vicious, because he has separated all Modesty from his Vice, he glories in that which others are ashamed of, and has taken up the Office of being the Devil's Vice-Gerent, by first tempting Men to sin, and afterwards exposing them to shame.

Third,

Thirdly, *That a Man should not* *Not to spend too much Time.*  
*spend too much Time in Drinking.*

Whenever Drinking is allowable, besides, when we are adry, it is only for an innocent Recreation or Refreshment, when we are tired with Business, or have not much Business to do. And this cannot be for any long time, for either our Devotion, or Study, or Business, or Sleep, or something else will call us from it. But to turn this Recreation into an Employ, to take up our Sitting in a Company as if we were to get our Livelihood in it, is to contradict the standing Rules and Purposes of God's Providence; 'tis to set out our Time designedly for Drinking, and to do our Business by the By. I confess I have often heartily pitied the Misfortune of some Gentlemen of an illiterate Education, who can as soon spend an Afternoon without Breathing as without Drinking, for that is the best Expedient they think they can find to help off with their Time, which hangs so uncomfortably upon their Hands. Indeed these poor Gentlemen have reason almost to curse their Parents, that would give them no better an Education, whereby they can find no Relish in those noble Arts and Sciences, which makes the Lives of other Learned Gentlemen pass so pleasantly along: But however, no Gentleman can be so straitly put to it for  
Diverſion,

Diversiſion, as to be forced upon Drinking for it ; for when it is dry enough to be abroad, the Sports in the Field will give him an Entertainment more delightful and more innocent ; and at other times we have Books enough in our own Tongue, in Divinity and History, Law and Morality, to ſpend a Day with Delight and Improvement ; nay, even to take up with the frothy Entertainments of Plays and Romances, or every day to Card and Chat with the Ladies, is time better ſpent than to be a Drinking.

*Nor at ill  
Hours.*

Fourthly, *That a Man ſhould not be Drinking at unſeaſonable Hours.* The Night is a time which Nature has ſet aſide for Reſt and Sleep ; and when every thing about us in the dead of Night is huſht and ſtill, methinks 'tis extreamly unnatural to hear the Noiſe and Mirth of Jolly Companions. In the day time Nature ſeems to rejoyce with us, with a Face of Gaiety and Delight, and the ſight of People ſtirring about us, ſeems to add ſomething more of Life to our Pleaſure ; but in the Night time, Mens Voices ſeem to have a different Tone and Accent ; the Time of Night ſeems always to mix ſomething of a Melancholineſs with the Mirth, as if one was hearing Stories among the Tombs. Therefore I wonder how

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 81

it should come in fashion; in downright Des-  
pight to the Order of Nature, to sit up  
Drinking so late a Nights, when they may  
find so much more convenient and pleasanter  
a time for it in the Day. Nay, Drinking to  
Excess in the Day-time is not more Injurious  
to the Body than the bare sitting up long in  
the Night; for the Want of Sleep only, and  
the Chill of the Air are as mischievous as the  
Intemperance; so that for this Reason those  
that are resolved to set up for Drinking,  
should, methinks, take always their Dose  
in the Day-time, that so they may be able to  
hold out their Trade the longer. Add to  
this the Trouble and Disturbance which is gi-  
ven to Servants and Attendants (to whom a  
certain Regard is due) and oftentimes to whole  
Families; and this will be a Motive to a  
good natured Man to find out some fitter  
Opportunities to drink in.

Fifthly, *That he should not spend too  
much Money in Drinking.* Many a Man  
has been ruined in the World, not on-  
ly by keeping a drunken Company, but  
one that has been too expensive for him.  
For, one Man can afford to spend more upon  
his Diversion than will keep another Man's  
Family; so that if an ordinary Mechanick  
will keep Company with none but Gentle-

G

men

men and Merchants, 'tis ten to one but he starves his Family by only paying his Club with them, who yet may never drink to excess all the while. For every poor Man cannot pretend to those more generous Drinks, which may be well enough afforded by Persons of better Quality ; the drinking of them may be no Detriment to their Families, whilst the other Man's Children may pine for *Bread* as he is drinking *Wine*. Now such a Man ought to consider, that his *Diversions* is the last thing he ought to consult, that he ought to provide his Family of *Necessaries* before he allows himself those *Superfluities*, and that his pleading that he never drinks to excess will not in the least atone for his Inhumanity and Barbarity to his poor Family. And, perhaps, more Families, of late, in the Nation, have been ruined by this affectatious Vanity, than by downright Debauchery ; since Men of all Qualities almost have endeavour'd to live alike, since every little Man is ambitious of keeping the best Company, out of hopes of getting some considerable Character and Reputation by it, although by all sensible Men of their own Cabal, he is lookt upon but as a bold and ostentatious Fellow, and is adjudged by God Almighty for not *providing for those of his own House*, to be worse than an Infidel.



## Of Chastity.

The third Branch of Temperance is Chastity, which is a Vertue which consists in *avoiding all unclean Actions, and all immodest Behaviour.* Now therefore, that we may be perfect in this, we ought,

First, *To avoid all unclean Actions whatsoever in an unmarried State.* I will not say that a State of Virginity is a State of Perfection; but it is certainly a State of very great Beauty and Purity, 'tis that which comes near to the State of Angels, and the highest of any thing in this World to the Nature of God himself. But then this State is to be a State of Virginity indeed, not only of Celibacy, as the Papists generally make it; where, if the Parties keep from Marrying, they may commit all the Whoredoms and Villanies in the World, and yet keep their Oath of Continency most strenuously. Nay, to see how they abuse the State of Virginity, with such abominable Permissions and Dispensations, it would put a modest Heathen to the Blush. To find how a great number of the Casuists of that Church make simple Fornication but a Venial Sin, and when for Health Sake, and to expel an ex-

stimulant Humor, no Sin at all; that the Pope can give a License to commit it; nay, that he has actually granted such a License as is beyond what any Man, though never so wicked, would expect; for Pope *Pius* III. gave Leave to the Cardinal of St. *Lucia* and all his Family, to commit Sodomy all the three hot Months in the Year. And indeed the Libertines of the Church of *England* are so far reconciled to the Romish Church, as to plead for the Lawfulness of Fornication as strenuously as they, with this only difference, that these say, their Church has made it *no Sin*; and the other are pleased to say, that their Priests only have made it *One*. Therefore this deserves to be considered a little more particularly.

*First*, Fornication and all other Acts of Uncleaness are sinful, because they are an Undervaluing our Nature, the putting us upon the most shameful Practices, such as no sober Reason will allow; contrary to the Design and Purport of Nature, and to the unspeakable Abuse and Dishonor both of Soul and Body. For our Bodies were given us by God Almighty to be serviceable to the Soul in all Spiritual and Rational Employments, and for the Conveyance of sensual Pleasures, as far as may make for the Preservation and  
comfor-

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 85

comfortable Subsistence of the Animal Life ; but not to employ them to the vilest purposes, not to make them a Drudge to our wicked Lusts and Desires, and to serve to all the filthy ends of Beastliness and Sensuality. Nay, the Apostle carries on this Argument farther, 1 Cor. 6. where he bids us flee Fornication, because *our Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost* ; and therefore it is an horrible Impiety , to profane with our wicked Lusts that Place, which is taken up for the Residence of the ever blessed Spirit. But then what a greater Dishonor is it to our immortal Souls, those pure Æthereal Substances, those Angelick Natures, to consent to such vile Actions, contrary to all natural Law and Reason ; to make them so undervalue themselves, and to neglect their own Interest and Happiness ? And upon this account the Wise Man informs us, *Pr. v. 6. 32. Whoso committeth Adultery with a Woman lacketh Understanding* ; that is, he never acts more unbecoming an intelligent Being, he never degrades Reason more, than in that and such like Actions.

*Secondly*, This is contrary to the End and Institution of Matrimony, that State which God himself has appointed for the Propagation of Mankind, and for mutual Comfort and Assistance in this Life. For when once

Men betake themselves to these unlawful Pleasures, they grow very cold and indifferent to the Comforts of a married Life, and take all Opportunities to despise it as an Enemy to their Pleasures and natural Freedom. But this, at best, is but audaciously to break out from those Fences, which God Almighty has made about us, and to pretend to a Freedom which is inconsistent with our Nature, and contrary to our Obedience. 'Tis to castle and make void God's Holy Ordinance, to contemn and trample under foot, that Primitive Institution, as old as our very State of Innocency; 'tis to invert the Order and Prescript of Nature, to wrest God's Dispensations out of his Hands, and to prosecute their Enjoyments upon their own Terms and Measures.

*Thirdly,* 'Tis contrary to the express Word of God. For setting aside the Seventh Commandment, where under Adultery all Sins of Uncleanness are forbidden, and the woful Denunciation against them in many Places of the Old Testament; our Saviour's Command, *Mat. 5. 27.* has improved the old Precept: *I have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit Adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.* Then certainly

### Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 87

tainly all outward acts of Uncleanneſs are more diligently to be avoided, when the very thoughts and deſires of it are ſo abundantly ſinful. So the Apoſtle adviſes us, That we ſhould *not faſhion our ſelves according to our former Luſts, but to be holy in all manner of converſation*, 1 Pet. 1. 14. that we ſhould *not make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. So St. Paul again, 1 Theſſ. 4. 3. bids us *abſtain from Fornication, that every one of us ſhould know how to poſſeſs his Veſſel* (i.e. his Body) *in Honour*. And he tells us further, that *Fornicators ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*. From all which we may conclude, that, whatever the Libertines may further object, the Papiſts may as well make Murder or Inceſt to be venial Sins as Fornication; and as for the Popes Licence and Indulgence for it, it will ſtand us in little ſtead, unleſs he could let a Man into Heaven for that, for which God has plainly declared he will keep him out.

*Obj. 1.* But ſome object, That *ſimple Fornication* is no ſin, becauſe it is not forbid in the Ten Commandments; for if it be a ſin, it is a ſin againſt our Neighbour, and ſo reducible to the ſecond Table. But this is the conſent of two perſons voluntarily to an act, and then, *volenti non fit injuria*, they injure

no body ; and so consequently, this can be no sin against our Neighbour. To this may be answered, 1. That all Sins are not against God or our Neighbour, for there are some against a Man's own self, as are all such as are against the Dignity of our Nature, and the design of our Creation, as Drunkenness, immoderate Anger, &c. and are reducible to the second Table, either as the Causes, Incentives, or lesser Degrees of those grosser sins which are there specified. So Anger is reducible to Murder, because it is so frequently the Parent of it ; Drunkenness, and other Intemperance to Adultery, because it is an Incentive of it ; and so likewise Fornication, and all other Uncleaness to the same Commandment, because they are greater or lesser degrees of that Vice which is there prohibited. 2. But This Sin is a Sin against a Mans Neighbour as well as against himself ; 'tis an injury to the Relations and Families of the Persons thus abused ; 'tis an injury to the Publick, by despising Legal Matrimony, and contributing to the Birth of Spurious Children ; 'tis an injury to the Persons of each other, by dishonouring their Bodies, as the Apostle speaks, and furthering them in the commission of a known Sin.

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 89

*Obj. 2.* Others say, in favour of *Fornication* and other *Uncleannesses*, that they are things they cannot help; that their Temptations are so strong upon them, that there is no resisting them: and let them use all the Reasons and Arguments they can against them, yet still they will prevail; and therefore 'tis as good, they think, to make no opposition at all, as to be sure to be foiled in the Enterprise. But to this I answer, That I hope when they say they cannot help it, they are not necessitated or forced to such an action, for that is what we call a Rape; or that they are necessitated to them as they are to Eat or to Drink: All that they can mean by it is, That they have strong inclinations to them, which will cost them some trouble to Conquer. But then, what is this to a Necessity? Is a Man necessitated to be starved because it will cost him some pains to get a Livelihood? Is one forced to be a Slave to his Enemy, because he must be at the Trouble of encountering him before he can get rid of him? Why, so it is in the case of our Lusts and Passions, we must struggle and contend with them, Master and Subdue them, and not lazily suffer them to get the better of us, when with a little striving we might get the better of them. 'Tis in vain to say we must as well submit to these

these *Appetites* as to those other *Desires* of *Meat and Drink*, for the fulfilling of those is necessary to the subsistence of Nature, and without which a Man can hardly live a Day; but I dare say, no Man was ever starved by Chastity. Yet after all, if the Man's Inclinations are so untameable, as to render his Life uneasy by the impulse of continual Temptations, by the weakness of his Resolutions, and the wearisom employ of constant Watching and Observance, then God himself has provided a Remedy for this, the Holy State of Matrimony; and if he refuses to make use of this means, when he falls into Sin 'tis at his own Peril. I have been something long in answering these two Objections, because they are the topping ones of the Debauchees; by which they would excuse their own Crimes, and betray others into the like.

2. *To be Chaste is to preserve the Marriage Bed undefiled.* This is a Duty which has been accounted most Sacred and Inviolable in all Ages and Nations, and the breach of it was never accounted a matter of Mirth and Drollery but amongst us Christians, who nevertheless, to our shames, profess a Religion which establishes Matrimony upon a firmer Foundation than any. Disagreement and inequality



### Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 91

inequality of Temper or Age, are in other Religions causes sufficient for Divorce; but our Saviour saith, *Whosoever putteth away his Wife, saving for the cause of Fornication, causes her to commit Adultery: and he that marrieth her committeth Adultery*, Mat 5. 31. Nay, the New Testament is full of Exhortations for the making the Marriage State comfortable and happy. It engages us to Conjugal Chastity by the Honour of the Duty, and the Wickedness of the violation of it. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed Undeiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, Heb. 13. 4. It enjoyns a most particular Love and Affection to each: St. Paul commands the Ancient Women to Instruct the Younger ones *to be sober, and to love their Husbands*, as if none but who did so could be Sober, Tit. 2. 4. And in many other places, the Husband is obliged *to love his Wife as Christ loved the Church, to love his Wife even as himself*; which imply the highest and most ardent degree of Love and Kindness. Therefore, they that do any ways contribute to the breach of this Love and Fidelity, have a better pretence to be Turks or Heathens, or any thing, than Christians. But to make an Estimate of the Wickedness of the violation of Conjugal Chastity, be pleased to take a view of Adultery in its threefold Aspect.

I. Of

I. Of the Adulterer of any sort whatsoever that shall Defile his Neighbours Bed. This, besides the Uncleanneſs common to all Sins of this Nature, and the violation of Gods expreſs Commands, is an injury ſo great and intolerable, as none but the Injured Party can make a Juſt eſtimate of. How impatiently do we bear the loſs of ſome ſmall part of our Eſtates, the being overreached in our Dealings, and the ill return of our Adventures ? and yet as theſe are but ſlight, ſo they are repairable Loſſes ; but this is to ſpoil us of that, which all Men and all Nations have accounted moſt Sacred ; this is to diſ-unite thoſe Affections which have been bound together by ſo many mutual Plights and Vows, by the moſt Religious Oaths, and with the moſt Sacred Solemnity ; this is to introduce a Spurious Race into a Family, to put by often the true and genuine Heirs, and to deduce an irrevocable Cheat down to all Poſterity ; this is to expoſe our innocent Friend to all the Contempt and Contumely of the World, to all the inward vexations of Soul, and to all the miſerable effects of a divided Family. Methinks, however Men were hurried on by the impetus and rage of their wicked Luſts, methinks, I ſay, meer Natural Pitty, and the tenderneſs of Human Nature ſhould keep

keep them from acting an Injustice against their Neighbour, the effects whereof are so horribly cruel and so pestilentially injurious.

2. Of the wickedness of this Sin on the part of the *Adulterous Husband*; he that hath left the Wife of his Youth, and followed after strange Women, that has contemned the Chast embraces of the Conjugal Bed, for the polluted Love of an infamous Harlot: For him to behold the Criminal blackness of his Sin, 'tis but the casting his Eyes back upon those Sacred Engagements they made to each other before they entred into this Holy Order; to recollect those Vows and Protestations then interchangeably made, so uttered and so repeated with the most earnest and most endearing Accents; let him remember those solemn Promises made before God in his Holy Temple, in the face of his People and his Holy Angels; those Hands then joined together by Gods Minister in token of an indissoluble Bond, and an uninterrupted Amity; and then let him consider how monstrously criminal it is to break through all these Ties and Obligations, and to prosecute a Lust which is attended with all this Perfidiousness and Perjury. Let him consider farther, how ungrateful and ungenerous it is, thus to slight and despise her, who has left all to follow him,

him, that has quitted her Fathers House, and left her Mother that gave her Suck, to take Sanctuary in his Bosom, and to live under his Protection; thus to neglect and contemn her, that has hitherto lived with him in an inviolable Loyalty, an unspotted Duty and Affection, and a constant Care and Tenderness; that has, perhaps, adorned his Bed with a numerous Off-spring, so that his Children flourish like Olive Branches round about his Table; now after all this, for him thus vilely to abuse his good Co-partner in every Fortune, it does manifest him guilty of the most wicked Treachery, the foulest Ingratitude, and to have a Soul sunk to the lowest degree of Baseness and Inhumanity. Add to this the constant troubles and vexations in such a Family, the disobedience of the Children, and the coldness of their love to such a Father, the daily disquiet of the more innocent and unknowing Babes, that are wont to sympathize with their disconsolate Mother, the growing wickedness of their riper Children, that will be too apt to imitate the Example of so lewd a Parent: But I shall conclude this particular with that memorable passage in the Prophet Malachy. *The Lord hath been witness between thee and the Wife of thy Youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet she is thy Companion and the Wife*

of thy Covenant. And did he not make one & yet had he the residue of the spirit; and wherefore but one? That he might seek a godly seed: therefore take heed to your spirit, and let n<sup>e</sup> deal treacherously against the Wife of his Youth, Mal. 2. 14.

3. Of the Wickedness of this Sin on the part of the *Adulterous Wife*. Whatever guilt is contracted by the Adulterous Husband, the same is imputable to the Adulterous Wife, because of the mutualness of their Matrimonial Promises, and their other obligations to a mutual Gratitude. But on the Womans side, that is guilty of this Crime, there supervenes an Additional Wickedness. She, before she can arrive at this pitch of Impiety, must offer violence to her Nature, break through all the Fences of her Natural Modesty, and Steel her Forehead with the most hardened Impudence. She is not only guilty of the Breach of so many Oaths and Vows of Ingratitude to her kind Protector and Cherisher, but is perfidiously Disloyal to her Head and Superiour, to whom she owes so much Observance and Obedience; for whose sake she ought not only to maintain her Chastity entire, but even an unspotted and unquestionable Reputation; and therefore to Defile his Bed with the Embraces of an impure Adulterer, is not only an

an Injury but a Treason, a most Disloyal and an Impious Conspiracy. But the horrid consequences of the Fact sets her Crime above all Estimation ; to Bastardize a Family, and perhaps, to wrong her own Children of their Paternal Inheritance, to take off the Fathers Love from his own Children, and make him look upon them all as an uncertain, if not a Spurious Progeny ; to cause him to deny a sufficient Maintenance even to his true Born Sons, and perhaps, to leave them Poor and Succourless in the midst of his Affluence. These are such miserable and fatal Events of this Crime, that she, that notwithstanding all this, shall engage upon it, must, one would think, have divested her self of all the Tenderneſs of her Sex, and have put on a sort of a Devilish Cruelty, thus to offer to him in requital of his Love and Kindneſs, ſuch an irreparable and insupportable Injury.

*Modest Behaviour.* 3. *Chastity does consist in a modest behaviour.* I shall not here nicely Examine upon what account Mankind alone, of all the Creation, has acquired that Modesty and Shamefacedneſs about *Venerual Matters*, altho' I cannot ſubſcribe to *Charrons* Opinion, who will have it only to proceed from Custom and Deſign, to raiſe our Appetites the higher after thoſe things which we ſee purpoſely

purposely hid from us; but I think rather that it arose chiefly from the lapse of Mankind, who were not till then *ashamed of their Nakedness*, till Sin had raised in them such disorderly Appetites and Inclinations, to which they were greater strangers before; at the thoughts whereof, they were confounded themselves, and did endeavour, as much as they could, to hide them from the knowledge of others. But be this as it will, every Man finds within himself a Natural desire to skreen over with silence every thing in relation to these matters; and we see that those People that have laid aside this Natural Shamefacedness, and given themselves up to *Obscene Talk* and *Actions*, have been always accounted some of the greatest Monsters in Nature; that have offer'd more violence to her than any Men beside. And therefore it is observed, that in all Civiliz'd Nations, this practice has been used only by the meanest and basest sort of People; but those of a more refined Education have had the utmost abhorrence of it. And we may further observe, that nothing is so great a Guard to Vertue as Modesty is; for oftentimes, when the Devil has made himself Master of all the other Fences, this holds out till the very last. And therefore Men should be very cautious of abandoning that

Hold, which is oftentimes stronger than Reason and Grace together. And indeed, if we should set this single passion aside, Mankind would become a Herd of Goats and Satyrs, there would be no Order or Government, no distinction of Blood or Families, no Care or Provision for Children, but the whole Race of Rational Beings would become more Beasts than the Cattle of the Field. And this seems to me to be the Reason why God did implant (since the Fall at least) this Pudicity in Mankind alone; because he designed Matrimonial Co-habitation and a distinction of Families amongst Men, which he did not among Beasts, when he allowed them promiscuous Commixtures: Now this Natural Shamefacedness is as it were Natures check to all rash and precipitate Love, which being afforded in a greater degree to the Female Sex, does respite any indiscreet and unequal Proposals among young People, till such time as the more Mature and Wiser Judgments of Parents may interpose. Therefore I much wonder why so many of our Youth of both Sexes should purposely endeavour, by a vitious Conversation, and an affected bold Deportment, to destroy their inbred Modesty, which is so very Natural, and withal so very Beautiful to behold; for Impudence, tho'



### Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 99

it cannot blush, is ten times more ugly and shameful than the greatest Shamefacedness. So *Diogenes* seeing a Young-man troubled at his being put out of Countenance by a confident Man, *Be not concerned*, says he, *for this is the colour of Vertue*. But I am afraid a great many think Vertue to be of another Colour, when they make all their Actions to look of so different a hew: For how can one reconcile with Natural Modesty those Obscene Jest, which are the Themes of so many Virgin Tongues; who take themselves to be most *Witty* when they are most *Bold*, and do only *Laugh* at that which should in all reason make them *Blush*? It is a sad sign of the prevailing Immodesty of the Age, that one can hardly hear a good Tune, but the Obscenity of the Words is more grating to the Ears than the Musick is Melodious. Our common Dances are a sort of Anti-Pirrhick ones, and resemble the Camp of *Venus*, as the others did those of *Mars*. Nay, our very Makers and Actors of Plays, are wont to excuse the Immodesty of them by the Humour of the Age, which will bear nothing more serious; and hardly any thing is more common, than to see Persons of reputed Vertue and Honour, to sit admiring Spectators at such Plays, from which *Cato* would have run away faster than

from the *Floralia*; nay farther, in some places, it is accounted apiece of Breeding, and a taking Quality, in the Prophets Phrase, to have *Eyes full of Adultery*; where the looks and actions of Virgins are frequently such, as would in Ancient Times have deflowred a Vestal. But hold! It is not my Business here to write a Satyr upon the Age, but only to recommend Modesty, which we ought to shew in all our Words and Actions, not to speak any thing which doth in the least favour of Filthiness or Obscenity, rather to lose our Jest than our Reputation, and to part with a Lewd Company sooner than our own Innocence; to use no Actions which betoken any Lasciviousness or Impurity, but rather to choose to be taxed with an inbred Shamefacedness, than with an unchristian Impudence.

## S E C T. IV.

*That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Humble.*

A Proud Man can never be said to Contemn the World, altho', perhaps, he Contemns every Man in it: The World is his Kingdom, in which he has Enthroned himself, and therefore expects *all that dwell therein*

Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 101  
*therein* should do him Homage. The proud Man, tho' he may sometimes chance to despise Riches or Sensual Pleasures, yet Honour is such a Deity that he must adore, for the sake of which he will forfeit his Innocence and Integrity, his Quiet and Content, altho' it be but Imaginary; therefore such a Man is as *Carnally Minded*, and as far from the Contempt of the World, as the greatest Miser or Voluptuary in it. But the humble Christian, that with a modest Resignation submits himself to the Divine Pleasure, that retains but indifferent Thoughts of his own self, and pays all due preference and respect to others, may truly be said to Contemn the World with its Poms and Vanities, which so great a part of Mankind do Idolize. Now to Contemn the World by our Humility it is requisite,

1. *That we should retain the meanest thoughts of our selves we possibly can, in respect of Almighty God; for there is that infinite distance between an Almighty Creator, who is all Fullness, and a frail Creature; that no Humiliation can be sufficient, in any relation between him and us. Therefore whenever we Pray to him, we must not come like the Pharisee, Luk. 18. with big thoughts of our own Vertues and Performances, but approach him with the utmost abasement of*

our selves, the greatest Reverence and Prostration of Soul, and the highest admiration of the Divine Excellencies; as the holy Patriarch did, *Gen. 18. 27. Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes.* Or as the holy Psalmist, *Psal. 62. My soul truly waiteth upon God, for of him cometh my salvation. Pour out your hearts before him for God is our Hope* As for the Children of men they are but vanity, they are deceitful upon the weights, they are altogether lighter than vanity it self. So likewise, in all the Revelations which God is pleased to make of himself and his Will to us; we ought with all humble readiness and submission to embrace them, without consulting with the Niceties of our Reason and our own Flesh and Blood, whither we shall believe them or no. We must not, with the Jews, who when God had promised them the *Holy Land*, and Victory over the *Caananites*, say, *We be not able to go up against the People, for they are stronger than we, Numb. 13. 31.* We must not diffide with *Sarah* and *Zacharias*, because they were old and stricken in years, *Gen. 18. 12. Luk. 1. 18.* We must not with *Nicodemus*, when Christ reveals Truths to us, ask *how can these things be, Joh. 3. 9.* But, whatsoever God is pleased to impart to our Knowledge, or to promise to our Hopes, we must with an humble

### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 103

humble Faith and Affiance rely upon his Holy Word ; we must not with an haughty Disdain deny the Truth, because it doth not comport with the Maxims of our weak Reason, or slight the Promise, because the greatness of it is above our expectation, and the ways of effecting it beyond our comprehension. We ought rather to consider, that 'tis the God of Truth that speaks to us, and therefore who cannot impose a Falsity upon us ; that he is a God of an Incomprehensible Being, of an Immense and Infinite Knowledge, and that therefore we should not measure his Mysterious Nature by the scantiness of our Understanding ; that he is a God of an unbounded Power, who can with ease obviate all occurring Difficulties ; who can make all seeming Contrarieties conspire together for our advantage, and for the making good of his Promise ; and who therefore cannot fail us. So likewise *in praising God*, and returning thanks to him for Mercies received, we cannot perform our Duty better, than by an *humble acknowledgment* that all the good things we enjoy do proceed from his Bounty and Favour. For as for Pride, that possesses a Man with so much Ingratitude, that he had rather impute his Success and Felicity to second Causes, than to the All-Wise direction of Gods Providence ;

dence; Therefore, whenever we partake of the Divine Favours, by delivering us either from Calamities, or by bestowing Blessings upon us, we must not like *Jeshurun was fat and kick, and lightly esteem the Rock of our Salvation*, Deut. 32. 15. or like the Israelites *forget the Lord their God who had done so great things for them*, Psal. 106. And as God by the Prophet *Hosea* speaks of *Ephraim*, *Their heart was exalted, therefore have they forgotten me*, Hos. 13. 6. We must not with the proud King of *Assyria* say, *By the strength of my Hand I have done it, and by my Wisdom, for I am prudent*, Is. 10. 13. but we must with an humble Gratitude acknowledge that all the good things we enjoy do proceed from God Almighty's Bounty, that our Wisdom was too short, and our Endeavours too frail, to effect so advantagious a Blessing, that our Contrivances might have failed in a thousand particulars if the Divine concurrence had not assisted them; that we had never prosecuted so proper Methods, if the *Wisdom which is from above* had not enlightened our Understandings, and furthered our Counsels and Debates; that he might have blasted our designs in the first Enterprize, or might have suffered us to have attempted such Projects as might have ended in our own Ruin and Destruction. We ought not  
to

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 105

to think that it was for our righteousness, or for the uprightness of our heart, that God has done this great thing for us, Deut. 9. 5. for what can we wretched Sinners claim at Gods hands, when our repeated Crimes have merited so many punishments, rather than favours, of him? But we ought to acknowledge, that altho' we had been never so innocent, no Thanks could have been sufficient for them, because they had been so freely bestow'd; but when they are so bountifully given to them, who have deserved so much worse Treatment, we ought to admire and adore the Munificent Hand which so liberally conveyed them to us. And in this strain of an humble Gratitude, we find the Pious Saints of Old commemorating the Divine Mercies and Benefits. So holy Jacob, Gen. 32. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of the mercies which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my Staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two Bands.* So the Devout Psalmist, *Who am I, and what is my People? for all things come from thee, and of thy own have we given thee.* 1 Chron. 29. 14. And lastly, we ought with an humble submission to bear whatsoever afflictions God is pleased to lay upon us. We must not in a fit of impatience say, *God is cruel unto us,* Job 30. 21. we must not repent us of our Service to him, as they did  
who

who cried, *What profit is it to serve the Lord ;* but we ought rather, under the severest Calamities, with old *Ely*, to say, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,* 1 Sam. 3. 18. or, with holy *Job*, *What, shall we receive good things at the hands of God, and shall we not receive Evil ?* Job 2. 10. So that whenever God thinks fit to send his Scourge to Chastize us for our faults, our *Humility* will teach us not with a Stomachful Rage to fly in the face of our kind Parent, who designs by his seeming severity our greatest benefit ; but will make us acknowledge, that our sins have merited a far sharper Tryal, and that it is the goodness of God, that he is pleased to accept so slight a punishment for so heinous offences ; that he does not *delight in plaguing us*, and that he *will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able ;* that our afflictions serve only to refine our Vertue, and to give it a greater lustre in this World, or else to make our Crowns shine brighter in the other.

*Not to be proud of Gods Gifts.*      2. *We ought not to be proud of any Gifts whatsoever which God has bestowed upon us.* There is nothing in the World looks with a greater Face of Folly and Impudence, than for a Man to vaunt and swagger, and look big, upon something which all the World knows is none of his own. It were an Impudence intolerable for



### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 107

for a Beggar to strut about in a borrowed Livery, and to Dispute his Gentility with those that knew who had furnished him out with those Habiliments. Nor would it be more Modesty for a Servant, to set a value upon himself, and to despise his Fellows, only because his Master had Deposited a little of his Money in his Hand; and which he might reasonably expect would be every Minute called in. Now, if we consider, there is not any thing which men usually pride themselves in, but they have as little reason to do it as in any of these Instances; For of all the things that we do enjoy, and which are used so to swell our Minds, what is there that we can in a true and proper sense call our own, that we our selves have the absolute command of, and the enjoyment of which does not depend upon the Good Will and Pleasure of Almighty God? *Beauty and Strength* are things, alas, which too many value themselves upon, as if they were to be for ever entailed upon them; as if they were subject to no contingencies, but were wholly exempt from the Jurisdiction of him, who is the great Conductor and Manager of all Human Affairs. But, tho' *our Beauty be*, as the Scripture speaks, *like the green Olive-Tree*, and tho' we be *stronger than Lions*, yet when it pleaseth God to withdraw

draw these Blessings, 'tis but sending a Disease and *he maketh our Beauty* to consume away, like as it were a Moth fretting a Garment, and (as the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks) *he maketh our Hands feeble, and our Knees as weak as water.* Tho' we had all the Affluence of *Riches* that our Natures could enjoy, or our Hearts could desire, yet these would be all so uncertain and vanishing, that what was here to day might be gone to morrow; tho' to day they might seem *numberless as the sands of the Sea*, yet to morrow we *might seek them, and they are no where to be found.*---How many flourishing Estates do we every day see, by some cross Accidents, moulder and crumble away into nothing? How may we daily observe an under-working Providence, to dash all our Designs of laying up Wealth and improving our Estates, and notwithstanding the utmost of our Endeavours, to make those vast Possessions, which we had been so long heaping together, to vanish of a sudden, and to cause that mighty Fortune, which we thought, alas! to Entail for ever upon our Posterity, to Decay and Die before our selves?

How often do we see Men, that stand up on the very Pinnacle of *Honour*, that *fit on the right hand of Princes*, and walk along through the bowing Crowd, that have all Elogiums and

and Praises of Good Men, and all the Cringes and Flattery of the Bad ; how often do we see these tumbling down into Disgrace and Contempt, by a blast only, perhaps, of Popular Rumour, by the frowns of an offended Prince, or by the undermining Practices of an aspiring Favorite ? But altho' it should happen, that we should be such Darlings of Fortune, as never to Experience her Frowns, but to run thro' a Life of perfect Calm and Sunshine, tho' our Riches should accompany us even to the Grave, and tho' we should Die full of Honour, yet there we must take our leave of all this gawdy Pageantry ; when we go into the other World we must leave behind us all these things we have been making such a scramble for in this, thither we must go Naked, and Stripped of all these Gaities, and leave them to go to God knows whom, and God knows where. Now let the reasonable Man consider, if he can with any confidence be proud of such fleeting Enjoyments, that are frequently shorter than our Lives are, that for the most part leave us, or it is but a little while and we must leave them. With what Modesty can we swell our selves, and condemn others upon account of such borrowed Goods, which every one knows we could never procure our selves at first, nor can secure the possession of them

them one minute longer? And we have as little Reason, God knows, to be proud of the Goods of the Mind, and those things which we presume to call *Intellectual Perfections*. Indeed, our Philosophy has been so vain as to reckon these among the things in our Power, that we can controul and dispose of at our Pleasure; in which they tell us, We may be Gods to our selves, and enjoy an unlimited Authority over them. But if we scan over all the Excellencies of the Mind, both Natural and Acquired, we may easily be convinced, that they are in a manner as precarious as those of the Body, and as much depending upon Almighty Goodness, as plenty of Riches, or the Beautiful Contexture of our Bodily Organs. For tho' we should be *wiser than the Aged*, endowed with the most ready Wit, and the most penetrating Judgment, tho' we had Dived into all the Mysterious Truths of Nature and Religion, yet it is God alone to whom the praise is due; 'tis he whose Bountiful Goodness has bestowed upon us such liberal Talents, and he, when his All-wise Providence shall think fit, can withdraw them again from us. For the Lord (as *Salomon* speaks) *giveth wisdom, and out of his Mouth cometh knowledge and understanding*, Prov. 2. 6. And holy *Job* tells us, *Job* 32. 8. *But there is a Spirit*

### Cap.III. Contempt of the World. I I I

*Spirit in Man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.* The profoundest Wisdom of the most Sage Politicians, is but a glimmering Ray of his Eternal Wisdom, which whenever he thinks fit to withdraw, or obscure, and to leave them to themselves, they do nothing then but reason themselves into Danger, and all their fair Plots and Contrivances are but so many Stratagems turn'd against their own Cause: However, they may pride themselves in their dark Counsels and deep laid Designs, when *they say in their Heart who shall see it*; yet God, whose *foolishness is wiser than Men*, he *bringeth the Wisdom of the Heathen to nought*, and *turneth the counsel of Achitophel into foolishness*. By a blast of his Displeasure, he can dash all their Projects into nothing, and turn all the best formed Designs into Ruin and Confusion. Nay, further, how often may we see many of those great States-men, upon whose Management the Fates of Princes and Nations have turned, and others whose Parts and Industry have made an exact Survey of all Arts and Sciences, how often may we see many of these great Men, not only *to Die as a Fool Dieth*, but for some time to live so too? Whose Parts have left them on this side the Grave, and who have not only lost their mighty Talents of Wisdom and Learning,

Learning, but even the ordinary Gifts of our common Nature. Let me then a little apply my self to those whom God has endowed with these excellent Qualities; is it the part of a Wise Man to pride himself in that, which tho' he has it to day, it may be gone to morrow? Is it a thing becoming those that have so long Studied Knowledge and Experience, to value themselves upon a little Superficial Knowledge of some few things about us here, which can last but some thirty or forty years at the most, and then must be Eternally buried in Oblivion?

But of all Prides, that which seems to confront Heaven most, is the *Spiritual One*; This is a Sin of the most hardened Impudence; that, with all its Blackness of Guilt about it, can demurely plead its own Innocence, and set up for Sanctity with the Qualification of a Devil. Other sins, as conscious of their own Guilt, and their deserved Punishment, dread the Almighty's Vengeance, and fly his Presence; but this, like its Father the Devil, in the Book of *Job*, comes among the *Sons of God*, and presents it self before the Lord: This, instead of shunning him, dares oppose him to his Face, instead of

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 113

of fearing Punishment, expects Commendation. Now when the Holy Scripture informs us that it is *God that worketh in us both to Will and to Do*, and that of our selves we are not able to think a good Thought; what Impudence is it to be Proud and Haughty upon the Free Grace of God, which *like the Wind bloweth where it listeth*, and to despise others, upon whom God has not bestowed such plentiful Effusions. Surely Men must be past all Modesty, to pretend to be the peculiar Children of God, to boast themselves of extraordinary Talents of Grace, and to despise all the World which have not the same Confidence with them, as *Heathens and Publicans*; and yet notwithstanding all this, to make themselves to be the purest Members of that Holy Religion, whose greatest Characteristicks are *Meekness and Humility*.

Thirdly, *Not to seek after little Punctilio's of Honour, Titles, Precedency, and the like.* *To slight Precedency, &c.*

As for other Points of Pride, there is more reason to be shewn for them than for this; for he that is Proud of Beauty, or Wit, or a good Estate, has something to shew for it; but he that Prides himself to take Place of another, to be called by some worshipful  
I Name

Name he is fond of, does take up, methinks, with the *Pride of Bedlam*; where the poor Folks strut about with Tinsel and Feathers, and stand admiring and staring at their own Shadows. What a foolish, as well as wicked Wretch was *Hamman* in the Book of *Esther*, who would venture his Honour, his Fortune, and his Life it self, only to force a poor *Jew* to give him the Leg? And whoever puts himself to any Trouble to gain the like Observances, is not one jot the Wiser. For to attempt this and miscarry, is but to expose our selves to the Mirth and Scorn of others; and if we are so happy as to succeed, the Success will hardly compensate the Trouble. For what difference is there between the Air of the Right-hand, or that of the Left? a Man may breath in one as well as the other, and if either of the two will do him more harm, it is probably that which is most curst. One may have the same Chear, when he sits fourth at a Table, as well as if he sate first; and may have as good a Stomach too, if his Pride does not spoil it, as he would if he sate higher. But however, although a Man can be such a Fool as to Value these things, yet Pride is the worst Method he can take to effect it: To seek for Precedency is the surest way to lose it; and People will generally court a modest humble



### Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 115

humble Man to take that Place, which they refuse to the proud aspiring One. Which is the Observation of our Blessed Saviour: *Who-soever will be Chief among you, let him be your Servant, Mat. 20. 27.* And again, *When thou art bidden to a Wedding, go and sit down in the lowest Room, that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher, Luk. 14. 10.* Not that our Saviour would have us affect Humility, and to debase our selves out of a Politick Design of Exaltation and Advancement; but that if we be truly Humble in this respect, we have this additional Encouragement to our Duty, *viz. the Honour of Men, as well as the Praise and Reward of God.*

*Fourthly, To be Humble, is, Not to affect Things above our Abilities and Circumstances.* For, 1. The Proud Man is always outshooting his Mark, and wading beyond his Depth; he is for meddling with things he doth not understand, and is for giving his Judgment in Matters he does not comprehend; he is for undertaking Business he is not able to perform, and all out of a vain Opinion he has conceived of his own Parts and Abilities. Indeed the Nation is strangely pestered with these selfconceited Opiniators, that leave their Calling

*Not to affect Things above us.*

to let their Heads run upon new Schemes and Platforms of Government; whose Education has hardly been beyond the Anvil, and yet they would fain be tinkering the Church and State. Of such kind of People the Apostle speaks, *1 Tim. i. 7. Who desired to be Teachers of the Laws, when they understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed.* And truly we should be well taught and governed by such Mens Rules, who are so far from understanding Teaching and Government, that they understand not what they say. But the *Humble Man*, like the good Psalmist, *exercises not himself in great Matters, nor in things that are too high for him*: He makes the Sphere of his Action within his own Knowledge; he leaves great Matters for wiser Heads; he does not *begin to Build when he is not able to Finish*; he considers that the Business of his own Calling, and the Saving of his own Soul is Work enough for him, so as not to trouble himself with other Mens Business, which he has little time for, and which he less understands.

2. So again, the Proud Man is always endeavouring to live above what his Income will maintain; he is ambitious to vie Expences with Men of the largest Fortunes, to ape the Sumptuousness of some great Persons, whose Estate his falls much short of;

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 117

to make a mighty Blaze with costly Entertainments, rich Furniture, and a splendid Equipage, at a time when his Fortune perhaps is running at the lowest Ebb. But *Humility* teaches a Man to live within those Circumstances God has placed him in ; so that he is content to live up to the Quality of his own Condition, and does not care to ruin himself to make other People, for some time, fancy he is Rich ; and makes him willing to take up with the ordinary Respect which is due to his Condition, without spending his Estate to gain a flashy Repute, which will at last end in Scorn and Contempt. 3. It again teaches us not to Pride our selves in our Apparel, or to wear Cloaths which are unsuitable to our Circumstances, or above our Condition. One could hardly think that Mankind could degenerate into so much senselessness, and Folly, as we find so many Men are, to value themselves upon the outward Habiliments and Covering of their Body, and to despise all others, who have not the Fortune, or the Vanity to get so tawdry a Case for theirs. The Body itself is but the Shell, or the Casket for the Soul, or the *Vessel*, as *St. Paul* calls it ; and therefore that which we wrap about the Body must certainly be a thing too vile to Pride our selves upon. To be proud of Wit

or Learning, is something tolerable, in respect of this; but to be proud of fine Cloaths, is as silly as to overlook the Jewel, whilst we admire the Case. But for those to be fond of them, who have not Fortune enough to attain them, who cannot make themselves Fine without making themselves Poor, is *Solomon's Vanity of Vanities* with a Witness; and they, of all People in the World, do least deserve to be pitied, who are so vain as to starve their own Bellies to feed other Peoples Eyes by gazing on them. I would not be mis-understood, as if I thought the Office of Cloaths was not as well to distinguish Qualities, as to defend us from the Weather; for certainly, Persons of better Rank ought to wear better and costlier Apparel; but it ought not to be silly Fanciful, or prodigiously expensive. The most Honorable and Wealthy should not wear that upon their Backs, which would build Cities, and ransom Kings, as some have done. But for People of a meaner Rank, they ought to be more Plain and Frugal in their Attire, for God has placed them in a lower Condition, and therefore for them to Counterfeit an higher, is to repine and murmur at at his good Providence, and oftentimes to sacrifice the Well-being of themselves and Families, to this foolish and unaccountable Vanity.

Fourth-

Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 119

Fourthly, *To obey and respect our* *Obedience and*  
*Superiors.* It is observable, that *Respect to Su-*  
those proud Men in St. Jude, *periors.*  
who speak the great swelling Words, are the  
same that speak Evil of Dignities, and who are  
*Murmurers and Complainers.* And, if we take a  
view of all the Factious and Discontented  
People in the State, of all the Schisms  
in the Church, of all Rebellious Children,  
and Disobedient Servants; we shall find  
that all these wicked Disorders are bottom-  
ed mostly upon Pride. One thinks himself  
too much a States-man to be governed by  
any body else, and that things will never  
go well unless he were advanced to the  
Helm of Affairs, and attributes all the  
Miscarriages which happen, the not  
following his Projects. The Ringlea-  
ders, in almost all Rebellions, have been  
but some proud discontented Spirits, who  
could not brook a Disgrace from their Law-  
ful Prince, or the Disappointment of a Pre-  
ferment. *Arius* and *Dioscorus* are two re-  
markable Instances in Church History, of  
Men that broached their Heresies, because  
they missed those Ecclesiastical Dignities  
they pretended to. And I doubt not, if we  
were to Anatomize the present Schisms from  
our National Church, we should quickly  
find, that the Non-compliance (of our more

knowing Dissenters especially, and where Interest is not concerned) proceeds only from this, that they scorn to own themselves to have so long continued in an Error; and that they cannot brook to comply with those Ceremonies, they have so unreasonably, and so stiffly opposed. Nay, all the disobedient Children and Servants we ever knew, have chiefly been tempted to this Sin, by the Haughtiness of their Minds, by their disdaining to submit to the Discretion of others, by thinking themselves *wiser than their Teachers*. St. Peter, when he enjoyns the *Younger to be subject to the Elder*, he adds, *and be ye clothed with Humility*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. as well knowing that this Duty of *Humility* is the greatest Motive to that of *Obedience*. For the Man of a modest humble Mind, thinks that his Superiors do better understand the Art of Governing than he; that there are some secret Springs of their Actions which he is not let into; that Success does not always answer to the best laid Designs, and that it is better to accuse his own Ignorance in such Affairs, than their Abilities or Sincerity. Such an one can with Temper and Resignation, suffer his Prince to take back into his Hands a Place of Honour or Advantage, or to deny him a requested Favour: He considers, he ought rather to pay his Gratitude for

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 121

for the gracious Bounty which bestowed it at first, and continued it so long, and not to meditate Revenge upon him, because he is bountiful no longer; he thinks with himself, that it is some Defect in his Qualifications, or that he has not yet enough merited the Favour he desired. So likewise Humility doth bound the Ambition of aspiring Churchmen, makes them leave the Judgment of their Merits to those whom the Laws have entrusted with Preferments; it keeps them from making importunate Sollicitations and Addresses to Great Men, and teaches them to bear a Repulse with Meekness and Acquiescence; it puts them upon Enquiry, whether their Piety and Learning were equal to the Greatness of their Competition, and so for the future makes them double their Diligence, that their Defects may be no longer a Bar to their Preferment. It teaches Children to honour and obey their Parents, by considering, that their Age and Experience in the World has endowed them with a greater Share of Prudence; and therefore that it is more fitting to govern their Actions by their Advice and Direction, than by their own green Understandings: It instructs Servants to pay all dutiful Obedience to their Masters, by putting them in mind, that it is unreasonable to dispute their Commands,

mands, whose Subjection they have placed themselves under ; to think that their Disobedience is more irrational than their Masters Injunctions, who are to be supposed to understand their own Business best. Now if all Men would endeavour to square their Actions by these Rules, which Humility doth suggest, what glorious Times, or what Halcyon Days should we behold ! what Ease and Quiet to the Government, what Peace and Tranquility to the State, how much Charity and Piety would reign in the Church, what Fidelity would be found at Court, and what Heartiness and Obedience in City and Country ! If we should all do our utmost in the Performance of this Duty, we should find such a strange Reformation in all things of publick Concern, and private Order and Obedience ; so much Peace, and Love, and Unity, so much Success, Advantage and Prosperity , that we should in a manner be persuaded, like the People of *Lystra*, that the Gods were come down to us in the likeness of Men, *Act. 14. 11.*

*Courteous to  
Inferiours.*

Fifthly, *To behave our selves  
courteously and obligingly towards our  
Inferiours, of what Condition soever.* If we  
are placed in a Post of Publick Justice, we  
must have a care of entertaining any Respect  
of



Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 123

of Persons; we must distribute Justice as equally to the poorest Litigant, as to the most Opulent and Honourable; for God gives it; as a most special Command, to all in such Authority; that *they relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, and plead for the Widow, Isa. 1. 17. To defend the Poor and Fatherless, and to do Justice to the Afflicted and Needy, Psal. 82. 3.* And he denounces the most terrible Judgments against those that Judge unjustly, and accept the Persons of the Wicked, Psal. 82. 2. Against those that beat his People to pieces, and grind the Face of the Poor, Isa. 3. 15. That have dealt by Oppression with the Stranger, and vexed the Fatherless and Widow, Ezek. 22. 7. Nay, if the Line of Justice be to be stretched on any side, by a favourable Opinion and Construction, it ought to be in Favour of the poorest Party, who can be least supposed to be guilty of Fraud and Artifice, and whom should we make to fore-go his Right, it would not only be Unjust, but Inhuman and Cruel. And so in other Cases, when those that are our Inferiours desire our Speech, our Advice, or our Relief, we ought to give them an easie Access, and a kind Admittance. We ought not to intrench our selves within obscure and remote Apartments, and to set a Guard of surly Servants to keep out all Addresses and Applications that  
that

that are made to us: For really it is one of the most unreasonable, and most unjust things in the World, to deny a Man before he can be heard, and to refuse his Petition without knowing what it is. It is a shame to see, how much the Great Men of our Times have fell beneath the Generosity of the Grandees in the Roman State. They looked upon it as the greatest Glory they could arrive to, to be Patrons to the distressed *Plebeians*, tho' of the meanest Rank; they made it their Business to court and win over Clients into their Patronage; they bravely extended their Protection, not only to private Men, to Families and Tribes, but even to whole Provinces and Countries: They accounted this to be a new Beam of Honour, which shone upon them with far greater Lustre than their ancient Titles; and many, by defending an injured Client, have thought they have shared an equal Honour with a triumphing General. Read but the Histories of those Times, and see what a World of Good was done to the People by the *Letnuli* and *Antonii*, by the *Catos* and *Cæsars*, and what an expanded Beneficence did they afford. And then again, Consider what a few Imitators they have among the Great Men of our Age; many of whom wrap themselves up like Hedge-Hogs, within their own Prickles,  
place

### Chap.III. Contempt of the World. 125

place so many Janisaries and Sentinels about them, on purpose, to keep them even from the Temptation of doing Good. So again, When we converse with our Inferiours, we ought to shew so due Courteousness and Obligingness in our Discourse, and be far from all Morose and Insolent Treatment. There is no reason to think that we should raile at, and miscall our poor Fellow Christians worse than we do our Dogs, or to return ill Language to them, who approach us with all Submission and Respect : For by the Rights of common Humanity, the poorest Man may claim from us civil Usage ; and to treat him otherwise, is an Affront offered to Human Nature, which all Mankind stand obliged to resent. And of this the honourable *Romans* were so very sensible, that when they were in Places of Great Business, in which they were obliged to converse with a Multitude of the Citizens, they were wont to keep their *Nomenclator*, which was a Servant, who continually stood by them to give them the Name of all Persons who came to them, to the end that they might salute them with all possible Familiarity, and to endeavour to be beforehand with them in the Complement. 'Tis noble Advice, that of the Wise Son of *Sirach*, *Let it not grieve thee to bow down thine Ear to the Poor, and give him a Friendly Answer with Meekness*

*Meekness*, Eccl 4. 8. And if Great Men did consider how they riveted themselves into the Love of ordinary People by a courteous Behaviour to them, what fast hold they took of their Hearts by good Words, a serene Brow, and a pleasing Countenance; how an humble Deportment, without any Favour, does oblige Men, and how an haughty one does turn a Benefit into an Affront; how Men, as well as God, do resist and despise the Proud; how they admire the Free and Courteous, and how their Tongues ring in their Commendation; and especially, did they consider how easily and cheap, all this is done, they would certainly at least counterfeit the Humble Man, by that Means to grow Great.

SECT.

## S E C T. V.

*That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Patient.*

**W**Henever the World frowns upon a Man, if he shew a Restlessness and an Impatience under his Afflictions, we may be sure he rather loves the World than despises it, because he is so Disconsolate when it is unkind to him. It is a certain sign he is Captivated with the Charms of it, when he cannot bear its disappointments; therefore every one that does desire to Contemn the World, must take care to attain to the Vertue of Patience in all its particulars. Now Patience being a Vertue that consists in *bearing all Afflictions and Calamities with an equal and constant Mind*; and whereas Afflictions may arise, either from loss of a *Good*, or by the Presence of some *Evil*; he that would duly contemn the World, ought with all due Temper and Resignation to bear the loss of all those good Things God shall think fit to deprive him of, and *patiently* to rest under the *Evil ones* he shall think fit to lay upon him. 1. Now the loss of *Good* which a Man may sustain, may be either *Present*, such as the loss of *Estate*,

*Estate, Relations, Friends, or Good Name*; or else in *Expectation*, as the loss of *Honour* or *Preferment*, or the Disappointment in our Children, &c. 2. So again, Troubles and Vexations may arise from the *Presence of Evil*, such as proceed from some *Difficulties* we may encounter with, from the *Infirmities* and *Ignorance* of those about us, from *Affronts* which may be given us, and from *Diseases* and *Persecutions* which may befall us. Now 'tis the part of every Christian, to fortify himself by an *Invincible Patience* against all these Calamities, which arise either,

1. *From the loss of Good*; or,
2. *From the Presence of any Evil.*

So that to Exercise our Patience under the loss of any *Good*, we must endeavour,

*In Loss of our  
Estate.*

1. *To bear quietly the loss of our Estates*: Not to repine and murmur when God thinks fit to reduce us to Poverty, or to lessen our Income; not to question his Providence, or to distrust his Mercy, but to think that he is willing to make all things work together for our good, that he does it either to Chastize us for our Sins, or to make a tryal of our Faith, that we may be happy under his Protection, as well

### Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 129

well Poor as Rich ; that we are more like to grow better when we have such awakening Judgments to amend our Lives, and so much less Temptations to Sin ; that God will either again be more bountiful to us in this World, or will provide better for us in the next. But enough of this has been said in the second Section.

2. *To endure patiently the loss of* *Friends.*  
*Relations and Friends.* It is indeed, to Flesh and Blood, very sad and dismal, to reflect upon the loss of a Loving Parent, a Dutiful Child, a Dear Friend, or Bountiful Benefactor ; but yet, the loss of these ought not so to overwhelm our Minds, as to make us to act contrary to the light of our Reason to the dignity of our Nature, and the Duty we owe to God. We ought not, as the Apostle says, *to sorrow as men without hope* ; trusting, that tho' we labour here *in the Valley of Tears*, yet they *rest from their Labours and sleep in the Lord*. What tho' I have lost a kind and indulgent Father that has made me the *Son of his right hand*, the Glory of his Eyes, and the Darling of his Affections ; tho' I am bereft of a Tender Mother that bore me in her Womb, and foster'd me in her Bosom, yet as long as *the Lord is my Shepherd I can lack nothing,*  
K and

and when my Father and Mother forsake me the Lord taketh me up. We must consider that this is a Debt which must once be paid to Nature, that it is but what all men as well as they must undergo; that this was no more than what Nature it self designed, by ordering us to be Born of them to supply their Room, when they should be taken hence; that God has allotted them a greater share of Life, than the Generality of the World, by suffering them to live to such a competent Age as to leave a Progeny behind them here, whereas more Die before that time than live beyond it. Am I deprived of a Loving and a Careful Wife, the *Wife of my Youth, and the Companion of my Bosom*? I must consider that it was God who provided me first of this Blessing, that he is the same God still, yesterday, to day, and for ever, that *his hand is not shortened*, and that he can make up this loss with other satisfactions; that we were not Born into the World together, and therefore it must be expected that one must go before. Have we lost a Good and Dutiful Child, the comfort of our Lives, and the Hopes of our Family? We are not overmuch to bewail our Misfortune, because it has happened for his Good. God himself has Adopted him into a better Inheritance than we could have provided for him,



Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 131

him, and has adorned him with one of the Virgin Crowns of Heaven, as a Reward of his early Piety, *Rev. 14. 4.* Were not our Hearts, whilst he lived, too much set upon him? And did we not too much love and admire the Creature, to the neglect of the Creator? Was it not necessary to have this Bar removed, to have our love return into its true Chancel? Had not God before tried many ineffectual Scourges and Corrections, to bring us to Repentance, till at last he was forced to rouse up our sleeping Consciences, like the *Egyptians*, by such an amazing Judgment, as the *smiting our first born*? So that all this may be the effect of Gods Love and Tenderness for the Salvation of our Souls, and therefore ought to be repaid, by a thankfulness and an acknowledgment of his Mercy and not by a Repining at his Providence. Have we a Dear Friend snatched away from us by unexpected Death, whose love; like *Jonathans*, was very pleasant unto us, wonderful, and passing the love of Women? Yet God, our best Friend, will remain with us, his Friendship can be ended by no Period of Time, nor can be equalled by any Mortal Affection; for he so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son to Die for us. Shall we bemoan and hanker after the senseless Ashes of a departed Friend, and neglect to

repay our Love to the ever blessed Jesus, that Miracle of Love and Friendship, *who so loved us as to lay down his Life for us?* Have we lost a bountiful *Benefactor*, who has hitherto liberally rewarded our Industry, and upon whose Munificence we still depended for further Advantage? It is true, we can never pay acknowledgment enough to the Memory of so Noble a Friend, and we must Write the sense of his Kindnesses upon our Hearts in indelible Characters; but we ought not by that to distrust Gods Providence, and to let our Gratitude run over the great Original Cause of our Happiness, only by fixing our Eyes upon the *blessed Instrument* of his Goodness. We should consider that it was a Signal Token of Gods Kindness to us, that our Benefactor made such early Provision for us, and that he remembered us before he went to the *Grave*, *where all things are forgotten.*

*Under Slander.*

3. *Not to be Impatient or Dejected for the loss of our good Name.*

It is, perhaps, one of the Killingest Grievs which can befall a Man, to lose his Reputation in the World, to have all peoples Tongues sounding in his Reproach which he has not in the least merited, and to be *laying to his charge things which he never did.* But then

### Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 133

then he must consider, that this is the common fate of many Innocent Men; nay, the greater part of them that are of the most shining Piety; for their Goodness exposes them to the Envy of those malicious Tongues, whose wickedness does reproach them, whilst the Vertues of the other shines forth with such brightness. Our Blessed Saviour himself, that inimitable Example of a spotless Integrity, had all the blackness of Guilt thrown upon him, which the malice of Devils and Devilish men could invent. After all his Sobriety and Temperance, after all his Mortifications, his long and unparalleled Fasting, he was reproached as a *Glutton and a Wine bibber, a friend of Publicans and Sinners.* Tho' he spake such things as never man spake, tho' he so frequently confuted the Jewish Doctors, Vindicated *Moses* from the wicked Glosses they had dressed him up in, tho' he over and over made it appear to them that he did *not come to destroy the Law but to fulfil*, yet he was reproached as a Preacher of strange Doctrines, as a Seditious Person that set up for a Temporal Kingdom in opposition to *Cæsar*, that he had no Commission and Authority for his Preaching, that he had a Devil, and came to destroy *Moses* and the Prophets. Altho' he produced Miracles in confirmation of his Doctrines, to the astonish-

ment of the Beholders, more and greater than all the Prophets down from *Moses* to *Malachy*, yet they attributed all the efficacy of his Almighty Spirit to the power of Satan, and would have him to cast out *Devils* by *Belzebub the Prince of the Devils*. When therefore we have so great an Example before us of reproached Innocence, we ought to account it matter of great Joy to be thought fit to tread in the steps of our blessed Master. We fall infinitely short in Dignity to our Glorious Redeemer, and therefore any Disgrace which we can suffer must be inconsiderable to that which he underwent; who yet, notwithstanding this, *despised the shame*. Whatever Infamy we undergo, yet if we have a good Conscience to bear up our Spirits, we may defy all the Censure of the ill-natur'd World; when we have his Sunshine within our own Breasts, we need not value all the gloomy Clouds which hang hovering without us. 'Tis to the Judgment of God that we are to stand or fall, and not to that of peevish men; and if we can keep a Conscience void of offence in his sight, who knows our Innocency, we need not much matter how we appear in the vitiated Eyes of others. 'Tis but the ill Opinion which some good men have of us that need to disturb us, and they will shortly be undeceived,

### Cap. III. Contempt of the World. 135

ved, either by our vindicated Integrity in this World, or in the great Judgment of the other, *when all hidden things shall be revealed*; but as for the Evil ones, we could never expect to have their good word, unless we would agree to be as wicked as they. It is but a little time, in comparison of the duration of our Being, before our Innocence will be compleatly cleared, and why should we be more hasty than God is, who defers the vindicating of his Providence to that great time of *Retribution*, altho' he sees his Being Disputed, his Providence Denied, his holy Name and Word every day Blasphemed, by Insolent and Daring Sinners?

4. *To bear patiently the loss of* Loss of Preferment.  
*any Honour or Preferment we ex-*  
*pected.* If we would condemn the World as we ought to do, we ought not so to set our Hearts upon any thing we have a mind to here, but that we bear the disappointment of it with a great deal of Temper and Indisferency; for we ought to consider that this is a World of Contingencies, which no one can expect a constant run of Fortune in; that there are so many unexpected hits which turn the Scales in every Design we embark in; that there are so many cross Rubs which lie in the way, that we can never be posi-  
5001
tively

tively certain of Success, till we have attained it. Then why should we set our Hearts upon that which we were not sure would ever be ours? And why should we be impatient in being disappointed of such a thing of which we might foresee so many thousand ways of missing? We must think that other Men had their Minds as big with hopes and expectations as we; that many of us were driving on the same Design, and probably with equal degrees of Incouragement; that but one of the Competitors could bear away the Prize, and all the rest must be unsuccessful; and therefore should consider, that if Fortune was never so regular, we had no reason to expect that for which we had so much odds against us. It should content us that we have managed the whole Design with a Prudent and Wise contrivance; that we have set every Wheel a moving that we thought would work on for our purpose; that we have removed every Obstacle out of the way that seemed to lie cross to us; but if any unforeseen Accident has sprung up upon us, which it was not in the reach of Human Wisdom to provide against, and which no prudent man would have thought of; we must be content in our Miscarriage, when our Projects are over ruled by the Providence of Heaven, or by some unforeseen

**Chap. III. Contempt of the World. 137**

seen Contingencies, which we were in no ways Masters of. Perhaps one ill success was owing to the Weakness of our own Merits ; and we are so partial to our selves, as to bemoan that as our ill Fortune, or an Injury to us, which was but the Result of a Wise and a Just Determination. We should consider further, that God oftentimes disappoints us in one Design, on purpose that we may be successful in another, which may be more advantageous to us ; and that therefore our Miscarriage in this is a Patent from Heaven for something better. And lastly, we should also consider with our selves, that God may thus disappoint our Hopes upon some Spiritual Design, upon account that such a Preferment may be a Snare to our Innocency, a Temptation to Pride or Vain-Glory, Injustice and Luxury ; he may do it to mortifie some Vice within us, to abate and quel our Pride and Ambition, and to see how we can brook a Repulse and a Miscarriage ; he may bring it about on purpose to wean us from the World, that we should not put any Confidence in earthly Things, and to bring us to a more stedfast Dependance upon his Goodness, when we find by our Experience, that all things else are so liable to fail us. Now to be Impatient or Discontented in these Cases, is to fly in the Face  
of

of Heaven whilst it is reaching out a Benefit unto us.

*Fifthly, Not to be Impatient, although our Children do not succeed so well in the World as we might have expected.*

If it shall please the Providence of God to be less Bountiful to our Children in their Worldly Success; though they do not thrive proportionably to our Expectations, though their Improvement be not answerable to the Advantages they have had from us, though their States or Fortunes decrease and run backwards, either by accidental Losses, or a less prudent Management; we ought not to overcharge our Souls with an extravagant Grief for such Miscarriages. We ought rather to consider, That it is not in Man's power to carve out his own Fortune as he pleases; but that it is the Over-ruling Providence of God, which deals his Favours out according to his alwise Pleasure: That God has ordained several States and Conditions of Life in the World, and that every One must be supplied with one or other; that all cannot be Rich, and some must be Poor; that there must be one to *Grind at the Mill*, as well as one to *sit upon the Throne*; and therefore among the innumerable Conditions of Life, it is a Mercy that God does not suf-  
fer



for our Children to fall into the lowest Dregs of Poverty. It is unreasonable to expect, that the Children of Rich Parents should always be intitled to Riches too; for that were to entail Riches only to peculiar Families; it would be to confine God's Bounty and Providence just to such Measures, and to discourage the Industry of the Poor, by having no possibility of an ample Reward. We should think, how that Riches are not the only Happiness our Children can possess; that it is a greater Blessing to see them *Good* than *Wealthy*; that it is a sweeter Comfort to us, to find that God has dispensed to them *the abundant Riches of his Grace*, than if he had given them all the Riches of the *Indies*. So likewise, when it shall please God to lay that sore Affliction upon us, of *Undutiful* and *Untoward* Children, we ought not to render our Lives perfectly uncomfortable, by our great Impatience under it. It should be a Lessening of our Grief, when we think of the unspeakable Mercies of God to all Sinners; how often he finds out the lost and wandering Sheep, and brings home the Prodigal Son; that he frequently opens the Eyes and Hearts of the most Blind and Unrelenting Offenders; that he who could afford Mercy and Pardon to *Magdalen*, that had *seven Devils*, to *Paul* that Persecuted him, and

and *Peter* who deny'd him, may, in Compliance with our earnest Prayers, give them Grace to repent and grow better. We should consider that we have done our Duty in giving them a Pious and Religious Education, by so instructing their Minds with good and sober Principles, and by setting before them a pious Example; so that their Miscarriage is owing only to their own Perverseness, and that therefore it is unreasonable by our Impatience to hazard our own Salvation, because they will neglect theirs.

*Secondly*, So again, we ought patiently to behave our selves under the *Presence of Evils*, as well as under the Loss of Good Things. As,

*Difficulties.* First. To go through with Patience any Difficulties we may meet with. When we have any hard Labour which we ought to go through with, we should not let a slothful Despondency possess our Minds; to sit still with our Hands in our Pockets, and only to sigh at our Task, when we should be going forwards with it: But we ought to bend all our Faculties to the Business in hand, muster up all our Strength and Power to encounter the present Difficulties, to ply our selves with Might and Main to get over them.

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 141

them. We should consider, that *Man is born to Labour*, Job 5. 7. and that *if he will not Work, he should not Eat*, 2 Thes. 3. 10. that a pining over our Task will but make it the more Difficult, will cause every Step we have to go forwards seem sorer and heavier, and will raise Mountains of meer Difficulties in our Fancies, when all lies plain before us; but when with Readiness and Chearfulness we set upon our Work, and buckle tightly to it, with a hearty Resolution, by God's Grace, to effect it; almost every thing then lies smooth in our way, or the hardest Parts we meet with, are sweetned by the Pleasure of Surmounting the Difficulty. So again, when we have some *Great Enterprize* to undertake here. We may expect to meet with an abundance of unlucky Rubs to cross our Intentions; where there are a number of Hazards to befall us, which may baffle our Purposes, we ought to have Patience to bear with them all, and with an invincible Resolution to push on vigorously with our Design, maugre all the unfortunate Accidents which may seem to discourage us in our Resolution. So likewise, when we are to set upon some *Difficult Study*, the Initiations to which are crabbed and unpalatable, we must not be impatient for the Hardnesses of the first Undertaking; but must labour on  
with

with all the Vigor and Alacrity we can, to get the sooner over with the Difficulty; we should consider, that those stony and thorny Paths let us into Gardens of Pleasure, and that the Delights we shall find there will over and above compensate the Trouble of the Journey thither. And the same is to be said of the *Painful Tasks in Religion*: When it shall please the Holy Spirit of God to awaken us from the Sleep of a sinful Course, and to give us a due Sense of our Sins, so that we resolve upon Repentance and a New Life; we must not be scared at the Unpleasantness of some Religious Duties, and the Difficulty of the Tasks; we must not be deterred from our good Resolution, when we think how many Sins we have to beg Pardon for; how much of our Life we have to unlive again; how much it will go against our Grain and Inclinations, to mortifie those Lusts and Affections which we have been so long indulging and pampering; but we ought resolutely to go on with the noble Design we have undertook; we must consider, that the Assistance of God's Spirit, which he will afford us upon our earnest Desires, will make our Work easie to us; that when we have a Knowledge of our Danger, we shall now spring on with an unknown Strength; that our Nature will now rise above it self, to escape

Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 143

scape that Misery, which unless speedily avoided, will certainly overtake us; that it is not a time to consult our Ease and Sloathfulness, when the everlasting Happiness or Misery of our Bodies and Souls lies at stake; that it requires but little time to bend our Actions, and make them pliable to the Rules of Vertue, and then *her Ways will be Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths Peace*; and which will at last be rewarded with those inestimable Joys, *to which the Sufferings of this present World are not worthy to be compared.*

Secondly, *To bear patiently the Infirmities of other men.* As we sustain the Office of Masters or Teachers, we should not let any Infirmities or Imperfections, which our Servants or Scholars are liable to, transport us beyond all Patience and Temper: But we should follow the Apostles Rule of *Bearing one anothers Burthens*, considering that we likewise, as Men, are liable to the same Imperfections. We must not let the *Carelessness* of a Servant transport us into violent Paroxysms of Anger; but must think that it is above the Strength of Human Nature to stand always intent and upon their Guard; that a thousand Contingencies and ill Accidents will happen, which are beyond the power of the wisest Men to provide against, and

and which it might be impossible for a poor Servant ever to have foreseen ; or however, that his wonted Care and Fidelity ought to atone for a little slight Inadvertency. We must not be outrageous at the *Slowness* or *Misapprehension* of our Scholars, when they do not presently take the Hint from us which we give them ; when those Notions, which lie so plain in our Head, seem to lie so cross and perplexed in theirs ; for we ought to distinguish betwixt the Judgments and Abilities of Professors and Learners ; their Minds have been long beat to such Notions, which the others never heard of before, That Familiarity which they have with the Things they teach, makes them appear more easie than really they are ; nay, they themselves have forgot, with what tediousness they at first acquired them. And we ought to behave our selves in the like Manner, when we have a Mind to convince those who are Guilty of some *Mistakes in Opinion* : We must not be outrageous at them, when we see them pleading for those false Notions they have espoused ; for we must know, that they are as really convinced of the Truth of their Opinions, as we are of ours ; that this World is such a State of Imperfection, that the most intelligent Man is not altogether free from Error and Misunderstanding ; that it is unreasonable

ble

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 145

ble to expect, that our Understandings should be the Standards and Measures of other Men ; that as long as there are different Men in the World, there will be different Opinions ; that a Man may with as much reason hate and affront another for having different Features in his Face, or a different Size of his Body, as for having different Thoughts of the same Thing : We should consider, that an angry peevish Disputant very seldom gains his Point, because his Heat is apt to spoil his Argument ; that Reason is of more Force to convince any one than Passion ; that a calm modest way of Arguing, which respects the Persons, whilst it refutes the Opinions, is like to be tentimes more effectual than all the loud Blusterings of an impatient Adversary. And so again in *Religious Differences*, we should not hate the Men because we dislike their Tenets ; every little Contrariety in matter of Faith, should not make us avoid their Conversation, as if they were Heathens and Publicans, or set us upon extirpating them, as if they were *Jebusites* and *Canaanites* ; but should strive rather to win them over by all the Gentleness of an obliging Conversation, and a Christian Love ; in all our Controversies, to put on a Spirit of Meekness and Condescension, a Calmness and Sedateness of Mind, that shall weigh all

things deliberately, and determine them impartially; that shall dispute without Heat, and convince without Triumph or Reflexion; in short, we should have a generous Charity to run through all our Actions towards them, and let our Love go with them, when our Judgment cannot.

*Affronts.* Thirdly, To bear patiently Injuries and Affronts. I know that the Gallant Men of the Age will agree, if there be no other way to *contemn the World*, but only by pardoning Injuries, and putting up Affronts, they ought rather to despise that pusillanimous Religion, whose Doctrines are so contrary to their Rules of Courage and Honor. For they have unlearned our Saviour's Rule of forgiving our Offending Brother for *Seventy times seven* Injuries; and resolve for every slight one, like *Lamech*, to be avenged *seventy and seven fold*. But may such Gentlemen be pleased to consider, that to obey our Saviour's Commands in Forgiving and Loving our Enemies, is a thousand times more Honorable than their airy Notions of Honor and Satisfaction. For is it not more Brave and Generous to be Masters of our own Passions, rather than to suffer them to reign and domineer over us? Is it not more Noble to keep our selves in a quiet and sedate



Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 147

date Temper, to sit calm and unmoved at the Virulencies of a malicious Tongue ; than to suffer our Blood to boil up upon every little petty Offence, and to betray us into the Trouble and Danger of a Duel ? Can any thing shew a greater sign of Gallantry, than to possess a Mind of that Constancy and Firmness, which can suffer no more by Affronts and Reproaches, than the Marble can by the Clattering of Hail ; the Force of which is so far from wounding the other, that it only serves to break it self ? Is it not really more honorable, to shew by a Life of unblemished Integrity, that our Enemies Slander was false, than, by our endeavouring to take away his Life, to make Men suspect we are afraid of his Information ? It is a far greater Mark of true *Courage*, to fear God rather than Man : and to be afraid of his Displeasure and Punishments, more than of the lavish Tongue of every impudent Calumniator. But to be afraid of an Affront, and to rush boldly upon Damnation, is such a foolish Mixture of Boldness and Cowardise, as wants a Name ; it is to stand undaunted at the Mouths of loaded Cannons, and to be scared at the Crackling of Thorns. Nay, It is certainly more for our Ease and Quiet, to slight an Injury that shall be offered us, than to contrive ways to revenge it ; for every

Affront, like the Wind, gathers new Strength by Repercussion ; or like the Tumbling of a Stone downwards, that was easily to be stopped at first, becomes at last irresistible. The patient bearing of Affronts will make Men leave them off, when they find they cannot gain their Design in angring us ; but, when they find we are vexed and enraged at them, they have got their Point which they aimed at ; and their Success in that Attempt will encourage them to another. How much better is it therefore, with a Christian Meekness, to pass by an Injury, or to avoid the Notice of it ; to leave the Judgment of it to God in the great *Day of Retribution*, and its Punishment to him, *to whom Vengeance belongeth* ; by a patient Goodness, to follow the Example of our Blessed Lord and Savior, who, *when he was reviled, reviled not again* ; in *Praying for our Persecutors*, and *rendering them Good for Evil* ? This will at last mollifie the most obdurate Heart, and melt down into Compassion, the most bowelleless and unrelenting Cruelty.

*Sickness.* Fourthly, *To bear with Patience all Pains and Diseases which may befall us.*

'Tis but a sorrowful Motive which the Stoicks make use of, to tell a Man under a raging Fit of the Gout or Stone, that he should

### Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 149

should not be discontented, because Pain is no Evil ; when he feels every part about him to give their Principles the Lie. Tho' indeed we may pardon this strange Paradox of theirs, when we consider they were not so well assured of a future State, and thought that this Opinion was the best way to account for that great Question, which so puzzled the Heathen World, *Why good Men should suffer, and evil Men escape ?* But we Christians are furnished with such Arguments to suffer any Grief which can befall our Bodies, as none of the Schools of the Antients were acquainted with. For we are certain that God sends these Afflictions as a *Scourge to us for our Sins*, to make us take Warning for the future, by the Smart of these, how we again transgress his Commandments ; that the Sicknels of our Bodies is but the Physick of our Souls, to bring us nigher to God ; that *in our Afflictions we may seek him early*, Hof. 5. 15. A Man must be either a perfectly good Man, or an intollerable bad one, whom Sicknels cannot make better ; for although in the time of Health he stands proof to all the pious Admonitions and Instructions that can be given him, yet Sicknels will awaken him from the drowsiest Lethargy, will make him reflect upon those Actions, and listen to those Motions which

he was so much a Stranger to before. His Conscience, which only whispered to him then, will now speak in Storms and Thunder; and his Sins, which only now and then disquieted him before, by some secret Misgivings, will now stare him broad in the Face, and amaze him into amendment. Therefore we have no reason to repine and to be impatient under those bodily Infirmities which are the Marks of God's Correction; we ought rather to shew our Gratitude to him, for accepting this in lieu of far greater Punishments, which we had deserved; and with the Holy Psalmist, to *thank the Lord for giving us Warning*, Psal. 16. 8. trusting, that when *God has forgiven all our Iniquities*, he will *cure all our Diseases*, Psal. 103. 3. The poor Heathens could reap but little Comfort from their Sickness, because when they were to leave this Body, they knew not where they were to go, and therefore were discontented under any Pain, for fear it tended to the Dissolution of their Being; they had rather their Soul should be still lodged in its ruined Cottage here, than either to sink into nothing, or to be turned naked and stript into some dark unknown Country. But we Christians have reason to rejoyce and triumph when Sickness approaches us, hoping that it is the joyful Summons for us to take  
our

### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 151

our Leave of the Miseries of a troublesome World, and to take Possession of a *Crown incorruptible, which fadeth not away.* For if Men take care to lead their Lives with that Piety which the Gospel recommends, and which will entitle them to Heaven, and ascertain them of Salvation; the Heralds of Peace to a distressed People, nor the Messenger of Pardon to a despairing Criminal, will not be half so unwelcome as a last Sickness is to them, *who desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is better.*

Fifthly, *To suffer with Patience* *Persecutions, any Persecution which may befall us.*

Now to *suffer for Righteousness sake*, is what every Christian is to expect, and to prepare for; although in these peaceable Times of the Gospel, but a few in comparison of the former Ages are called out to it. For our Saviour gives it as a general Rule to all his Followers: *He that will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me, Mat. 16, 24.* And he threatens our Failure herein with no less than eternal Damnation. *He that denieth me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven, Mat. 10. 33.* Therefore whenever God thinks fit to summon us in to give Testimony to the Faith by our Sufferings, Persecutions or Mar-

L 4

tyrdom,

tyrdom; then we must with an humble Contentedness and Resignation, submit our selves to the Divine Will and Pleasure; we must with readiness reach out our Hand to receive the bitter Cup; *counting it all Joy when we fall into diverse Tribulations, and when we are thought worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ.* For it shews but a pitiful zeal for our Religion, to stand up for it only when we prosper and flourish under it; to follow Christ only whilst he feeds us with the Loaves, and to forsake him in the Garden, and at *Mount Calvary*. This indeed is the hardest Lesson which Christianity teaches; but then it is encouraged with the most glorious Rewards, *Mat. 5. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Rev. 2. 10.* The Hopes of this made the Primitive Professors of our Religion, with the greatest Earnestness, even to desire and pray for Martyrdom, and to wish for the greatest of Sufferings, to the end that they might enjoy the greater Reward, The Hopes of this inspired those noble Armies of Martyrs with that brave Spirit and Resolution, as made them outface Death in his grimest Aspect; that made tender Virgins to leave the Nuptial Garlands for the Crown of Martyrdom; that enabled others to go singing to the Racks and the Lyons, to smile upon the Gridirons, and in the midst of the Chaldrons;

Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 153

Chaldrons ; that did invigorate them with that invincible Patience, whereby they wearied out, not only the Cruelty, but even the Invention of the Tormentors.

S E C T. VI.

*That a Contempt of the World doth consist in setting our Affections upon God and Heavenly Things.*

**H**itherto Morality has shewed us the way to *Contemn the World*, and the dusky Lamp of Nature has gone before us, and afforded us Light enough to discover the Vanities thereof ; and how unreasonable and dishonourable it is for a Rational Creature to be defiled by those Pleasures, or overcome by those Passions, which betray him into Covetousness and Excess, Pride and Impatience. For many of the Heathen World have been eminent in those Vertues we have hitherto been describing ; or at least they have pretended to them as much as the devoutest Christian. They have been so *magnanimously* Brave, as to scorn to do a base thing, for the sake of the Honourableness of Vertue, and the Turpitude of Vice : They have despised all the *Riches* of the World with the most fastidious Contempt ; they have

have been *Temperate* to admiration, have been *Modest* as the Reclusest Vestal, and *Chast* as the *Flamen's* Bed; they have neglected all proffered *Honour*, and affected the meanest *Obscurity*; they have bore Pain with an invincible *Patience*, and outfaced Death it self with a stupendious *Bravery*. But yet there are some farther *Heights* which Christianity enjoyns, that are necessary to a true *Contempt* of the World, and which the Heathens were ignorant of. And those are contained in that former Part of the Apostles Precept, *Set your Affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth*, Col. 3. 2. Now a great Number of them, like Men of Sense and Spirit, thought these little things upon the Earth, were too vile to set their *Affections* on, and that it would reflect upon their Rationality to be enamoured with such fleeting Pleasures: But then they were unable to perform the former Part of the Command; for they had but very imperfect Notions of those *things above*, which are the true and noble Objects of our Affections. These clear Manifestations which God has been pleased to make to us of his Nature, and the unquestionable Promises he has given us of an eternal Reward in another Life, have in them a Magnetick Attraction to raise our Affections a great deal higher, to hinder their



### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 155

their dull Weight from pulling them downwards to the Earth, and do as it were draw them to another Centre. Morality indeed might effect, that a Man should not lie groveling upon the Ground, and wallowing in sensual Pleasures; it would enable him in some measure to stand erect, like a reasonable Creature, and not to stoop down to every puny Object that lay before him; but those happy Revelations, which our Religion affords us, inspire us with a sort of Angelical Nature, joyn the *Seraph* and the Man together, add Wings to the Soul, and make her take her Flight toward Heaven. This setting our Affections on things above. This Spiritual Mindedness, which is so much commended in Scripture, does consist in these two Particulars,

I. In an hearty Love of God.

II. An earnest Desire of Eternal Happiness.

I. In a hearty Love of God.

By the *Love of God*, I do not understand here the whole Duty of the Christian Religion; for the Love of God sometimes signifies as largely as the *Fearing* him does, that is, the doing every thing which God commands to the utmost of our Power; and then

then the Love of God takes in all the Duties of Morality and revealed Religion. As the Apostle takes it, *Rom, 8. Every thing worketh for good to them that love God. So 1 Cor. 2. Eye hath not seen, nor Ear hath heard the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Neither do I mean any unusual transported Spirit of Mind, by which the Soul is generally filled with Exultations and Raptures, whenever it happens to think of God. For these, where they are found, are rather the Effects of mens bodily Constitutions, than the peculiar Symptoms of a true Christian Love; which is best when it is constant, and even throughout the whole Course of our Lives, and does not take us by Fits and Spurts. Where-ever such passionate Returns of Zeal are found, they are good Signs, and Indications of Piety, but they are not Piety it self; they do usually shew a Man to be good, but they do not make him so; such heated Transports do no more entitle a Man to the Love of God, than an excessive Custom of Laughter entitles him to be a risible Creature. But by a Love of God, *I understand that Complacency which we take in the Deity, arising from the Consideration of the Excellence of his Nature, and his Bounty to us.* For any thing may be rendered the Object of our Love, either by having very great Perfection-  
ons

Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 157

ons and Excellencies in it self, or by the procuring us any considerable Benefit. Now for both these Reasons we ought to love God, or to set our Affections upon him.

1. Because he is the most Perfect and Admirable Being.
2. Because he is the most Kind and Bountiful to us.

1. Because he is the most Perfect and Admirable Being :

Therefore, in order to a Just Contempt of the World, and a setting our Affections upon God, we must,

1. *Study and admire the Perfections of the Divine Nature.* It will be an intollerable shame for us, when God has made us alone, of all his Creation here below, capable of contemplating his Nature, that we should think as little of it as the Cattle do; that we should employ all our Thoughts about the *Brutal* part of our selves, and think of nothing suitable to that Nobler part of us, which alone denominates us *Men*; and that we should drive away out of our Minds the consideration of the admirable Excellencies of the Divine Nature, which are the properest and the most worthy Objects of them.

Not

Not that we should with a bold inquisitiveness pry into the Mysteriousness of the Divine Attributes, further than God has revealed them to us, or that we should think we shall be ever able to come to a compleat knowledge of any of them ; for the Nature of God is such a boundless Ocean of Wonders, such a Fathomless depth of unaccountable Mysteries, that the closer thoughts of him make our Heads turn round, and distract and confound our Imaginations : But we should with an humble Admiration adore those Excellencies of his, which by our Natural Reason, or by his Holy Word, he hath been pleased to manifest to us. We should, with the profoundest Reverence, think of, and admire the *Eternity* of his Being ; that he always was what he now is, exquisitely perfect, and full of himself, before all Ages ; that he is the One only, uncreated, independent Cause, that spoke all things out of nothing into their Beings, and was himself the only Self-existing one ; that he was innumerable Millions of Ages before the Chronicles of Time, or the remembrance of the oldest Angel ; that did Eternally display the vast fecundity of himself in the adorable Trinity ; that shall last beyond all the periods of Time, and Power of Fate, and shall keep, whatever of his Creatures he pleases, within

Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 159

within the everlasting Womb of his necessary Subsistency. We should devoutly consider the unconceivable greatness of his *Omnipotent* Power, which is bounded by no force, and can surmount all difficulties; that can, by the least Word make thousands of New Worlds spring up throughout the dark Extramundan spaces, and can, when he pleases, unspeak this again into Nothing. We must admire the boundless extent of his *Knowledge*, that sees all the Actions and Motions in the whole World by one Intuitive glance of his Knowledge; that from all Eternity foresaw every thing which was to be, with all its circumstances and relations, when they all lay wrapt up in the Womb of a thousand fore-running Causes; that dives into all the Clancular Thoughts and Intentions of Mens Hearts, and knows their Resolutions before they have determined them. We should profoundly Reverence and Adore that admirable *Holiness* of his Nature, which is so essentially pure and good; that there is not the least stain in his Thoughts, the least corruption or pravity in all his Actions; nothing but what is most exquisitely Good and Holy; nothing but what is grounded upon the Eternal Rules of Vertue; nothing but what does exactly agree to his Infalible Judgment, and what his Eternal VVisdom does

does Judge fit to be done. VVe must consider, that he does not, like us, give his assent to what is good, but may be hinder'd from prosecuting it by a stubborn VVill and Disorderly Affections ; that he does not use unrighteous means to accomplish his designs, never projects any contrivance, but what does uniformly agree with the Dictates of his most Rectified and All-wise Understanding. VVe should likewise Meditate upon the *Truth* or *Veracity* of this admirable Being ; we should think, that we do not worship such a God that will cheat and deceive us, that only sooths us up with fair words and empty promises, and means nothing less than what he tells us ; that does not keep up his State like Princes of this VVorld, by Political Tricks and Amusements, or aggrandize himself by imposing upon, and deluding his Creatures ; but such a one, whose Actions always agree to his Words, and his VVords always correspond with his Mind ; So that whatever God reveals to us, we may be sure it is true ; whatever he tells us is our Duty, we may be satisfied it is such ; whatever he threatens, we may be certain he will inflict ; whatever he promises, we may be confident he will make good. *Let God be True, and let every Man be a Liar*, says the Apostle ; that is, that God is so essentially True, that every

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 161

every Man be a Liar in respect of him; Truth is so interwoven in his Nature, that it is his very Being and Essence; it is as impossible for him to Lye, as it is for him not to be; as he necessarily is, so he necessarily is True, and we may be as certain of his Veracity, as we are of his Being. We must attentively consider likewise the Never swerving *Justice* of our great Creator, who does not dispose of every thing at Random, heaping his Favours upon those that slight and despise him, and oppressing his poor Creatures, who with an humble Obedience, to the utmost of their Power, direct their Actions according to his Laws; that does not suffer his Commands to be trampled upon with Impunity, and permit so many Profligate Sinners to live all their time Blaspheming God and Injuring Men; Preying upon the Innocent, and Wantoning upon the Spoils of Orphans and Widows; that does not tamely suffer Ambitious *Nimrods*, to Ravage the World at their Pleasure, to wade through the Blood of Millions of Innocents, to purchase their Glory; to raise their Fame upon the Ruins of so many Countries, without any pretence, but only to Sacrifice to their wicked Ambition; That does not suffer such prosperous Villains, to live on in a constant Tyde of happiness in

this World, and drop into the other, just like other Men; but does wisely take care, that, as they have had their good things in this World, they shall have their evil ones in the next; and shall there pay severely for all those Insolent Crimes which went unpunisht here; because, perhaps, their Fortune had raised them above punishment, or because their Sins had swelled to that unmeasurable bulk, as has made them fit Victims only for the Eternal Vengeance. So we ought to let our Minds, with the greatest Delicousness and Satisfaction, dwell upon the Contemplation of Gods *Mercy*, which is not any weak Womanish pity, which renders him unable to prosecute his Justice, because of the Cries of suffering Offenders, or which will not let him punish even his beloved Favorites, when they deserve it; but such a wise Relaxation and Mitigation of the severity of his Justice, such an Inclination to our Welfare and Happiness, as puts him upon all possible means of Redeeming us from Misery. We can never enough think of the Miraculous Goodness of this Divine Attribute, that makes God take greater Care to Preserve and Succor us, than we can for our selves, and be as willing to relieve us from Misery and Oppression, as we can be to be relieved; that will incline  
him



### Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 163

him to remove those pressures, which lie so hard upon us, and to suffer our Afflictions to gall and wound us no longer than they serve for our Benefit and Advantage; and that, if for reasons best known to his All-wise discretion, he shall not withdraw his afflicting hand in this World, he will then more abundantly reach out his mercies to us in the next; when the Joys and Triumphs of that Life shall infinitely compensate all the Troubles and Anxieties of this; that stupendious Mercy, which will deliver our Souls, as well as our Bodies, from all Calamities, which are incident to them; from all the spiteful Temptations of Evil Angels, from the Fraud and Malice of the Devil; that will support us under the direful pressures of a wounded Spirit, and the sharpened Stings of an accusing Conscience; the Contemplation of which, will give the Repenting Sinner a comfortable assurance of his Pardon, whilst a Naked view of his Justice only will frighten him into Dispair and Confusion. Now when we devoutly consider, and meditate, as we should do, upon these Glorious Perfections, we cannot but Love and Admire that Wonderful Being that is the subject of them; and in comparison of him, to despise all that we call Excellent in this World, which are only some glimmering Rays of

M 2

Beauty,

Beauty, which stream from him, the Inexhaustible Fountain of Light; which are only some little Rills and Streams, from the Boundless Ocean of his Perfections.

*Secondly*, To love God, as he is the most perfect Being, is, *To endeavor to our utmost to imitate him, and act agreeably to his Nature.* Whenever we have an extraordinary Opinion, a profound Veneration, and Admiration of, and a hearty Love for any one; we endeavor to our utmost to imitate the Excellency we find in him, we make it our Business to write our Lives after his Copy, and to transcribe his Example into all our Actions; and this is visible, not only in the virtuous Actions of great Men, but even in the little minute Graces and Gestures of their Body, which are greedily catch'd at, and taken up by their admiring Beholders. Therefore when God is such a Being, in whom all imaginable Perfections do concenter, and all possible Excellencies do shine forth, we cannot pretend to any tolerable degree of Love and Admiration towards him, unless we do our utmost, to Copy after so noble a Pattern, and to make our Actions suit to that so Divine an Original. For it is not in the least probable, that ever God would have discovered so much of his Nature to us, unless it were for our Imitation; for such Ends  
as

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 165

as the displaying his own Glory, or the Satisfaction of our Inquisitiveness, are Purposes not half so Noble and Rational, as the rendering us Good and Happy, by our Imitating Him, and acting agreeably to his Nature. Therefore when we consider, that we worship a God that always was, and always will be, that is, every where, that knows all things, and can do all things; we ought to make it our Study how to render our Behaviour suitable to so great a God. We must let our Lives be as vertuous as ever we can, that he may reward us; we ought to be most exactly circumspect in every one of our Actions, because his all seeing Eye is continually inspecting us; *he knows our down-sitting, and our uprising, and considereth our thoughts long before.* 'Tis in vain to think to find any where such an Umbrage for our Sins, as shall hide them from him; *for whither shall we fly from his Presence?* 'tis not secret Retirements, and dark Recesses that can do it; *for the darkness is no darkness to him, the darkness and light are both alike.* His vast unbounded Being is every where; every where, if we obey him, to succour and reward us; and every where, if we disobey him, to torment and punish us. He is a God that *can do every thing*; to whom the Winds and the Seas, and all the Powers of Nature

obey; he can rescue his Servants whenever he pleases, from the very Jaws of the Lyons; with a blast of his Displeasure, he can sink his Enemies into the Grave; or, with a stroak of his Anger, he can send them down quick into Hell, with all his Vengeance flaming about them. Therefore, we should take diligent Care, and use all imaginable Caution, not to offend so great a God; who is endowed with such a wonderful Knowledge to detect our Sins, and so much Power to avenge them. If God be a *Pure* and a *Holy* Being, we must not suffer our selves to live impure and wicked Lives; but must serve him with Holiness and Purity; for we can never think to be acceptable Votaries to so Holy a Deity, to whom we be so utterly unlike, when we have all the Stains of our Sins about us; we can never think that that pure unsported Mind should take Pleasure in them, who live in so much Turpitude, and in such a Sink of sensual and beastly Vices, as if they were Worshippers of a Heathen *Bacchus* or a *Flora*. If he be a *true* God, and of infinite Veracity, then we must imitate his Truth, we must not lie and be false to one another, and we must not pay a dissembled and hypocritical Worship to him, and before his all-searching Eyes. Seeing he is a *Just* God, we must have a care how we offend him,

### Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 167

him, we must not stretch and tenter his Mercy, when we know his Justice is infinite too; for though his Mercy be infinite, and can never be outsin'd, yet our Lives are finite, and may be snatched away from us; so that we may be never able to lay hold of his Mercy; and then we must be for ever delivered up to his Justice. If he be a *Merciful* God, we must have a care that we do not abuse his Mercy, and weary out the long Suffering of God, by continually straining it with our repeated Provocations; we must have a care too, that we do not undervalue it by a total despair of it; for this would be to dethrone God, and to deifie our Sins, by making them more effectual and powerful than his Mercies, and the Merits of our Blessed Redeemer. Now by doing this, we shall demonstrate, that we truly love God, and set our Affections upon him; when it appears, that we account him, of all the Beings in the World, the fittest to be imitated; and when we endeavor, by all possible means, to render our Lives conformable to that Original, and to leave nothing in them disorderly, and unagreeable to his most absolute Perfections.

2. To place our Affections on God, as we ought to do, We must love him as He is

our Benefactor, and the Author of so many Blessings to us. Which is to be done,

First, *By taking notice of, and considering the innumerable Benefits he bestows upon us.* To recount all the Particulars of the Divine Beneficence, would be a Task too mighty for any one to undertake, and would swell up such Volumes, that the World could not be able to peruse them. For in all probability, there is not the least Atom, or Particle of Matter, the least Stir of natural Motion, the smallest Plant, or the minutest Animal, but what does contribute some way or other to our Happiness and Welfare here. What admirable Benefits do we receive from the Light and kind Warmth of the *Sun*, that paints over and guilds the whole Universe with such a Variety of delightful Colours, that directs our Steps, warms our Bodies, and ripens our Fruits; from the *Earth*, whose pregnant Womb brings forth every thing that is useful and beautiful, without which the whole World would be but like the naked Ribs of some ragged Rock, without any Inhabitants upon it; from the *Air*, every Suck of which impregnates our Blood with new Vivacity, and sets this Machine of our Body a moving; from the *Water*, the continual Rarefaction and Condensation of which into Mists and Rains,

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 169

Rains, keeps up the Course of Life and Generation in all Vegetables and Animals; from the *Fire*, which dresses our Food, and comforts our Bodies, without which, a considerable part of the World, would, for a long time in the Year, lie torpid and benumbed? *Every Man* in the Creation, either by his Labor, or Counsel, or Company, does some way contribute to the Happiness of our Lives; for, though we should possess all the World, yet how uncomfortable would it be, to be forced to do every thing we have occasion for, our selves, and to walk a whole Life out mopingly alone, without Conversation? What a signal Mark of his Bounty is this *Body* we carry about us; the Contrivance of which, is so wonderful and beautiful? What admirable Motions and Secretions are there of the Blood? What wonderful Offices of Veins and Arteries, Nerves and Muscles, that sometimes move on regularly for fourscore Years together, without Check or Intermission? How is it owing to him, that the Body is provided with the useful Organs, for Seeing, Speaking, Hearing, Walking, and a thousand other Conveniencies; the loss of which would render our Lives strangely uncomfortable? What a multitudinous Production is there every where by his Bounty of *Trees and Plants, Fish and Fowl, Reptils and Cattle*;

*Cattle*; which are all so beautiful to our Prospect, and so subservient to our Use; and which God has wholly subjected to our Dominion? What an unspeakable Token of his Goodness is it, that he has bestowed upon us the Faculty of *Reasoning*: That enables us to deduce Consequences, to project Designs, to understand and conjecture Mens Thoughts, to treasure up things past, and to provide for the future, when so great a part of God's Creation want these admirable Blessings, which he has so graciously bestowed upon us. But then farther, What an immense largeness of his Almighty Bounty was it, in redeeming us from a Condition worse than nothing, which our Sins had plunged us into; by sending the Son of his Bosome to die for us, and to make a Propitiation for our Sins; to free us from those Miseries, to which the Lapſe of our first Parents, and our own Transgressions had fatally doomed us; and to entitle us to the Rewards of a blissful Eternity? This is such a stupendious Instance of the Divine Beneficence, as makes the Angels, not only *desire to pry into*, but causes them to stand amazed and transported; when they think that God should redeem the forfeited Souls of Rebellious Man, with a Ransome of that infinite Value. Add to this the continual Influxes of God's Holy Spirit; how  
he



Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 171

he moves, inclines, perswades, intreats, and oftentimes overpowers us into Repentance. Add further, the kind Assistances and Deliverances, which we every day experience from his particular Providence; how he keeps us from Temptations that lie ensnaring us, and from Perils and Dangers that are threatening us; how he contrives Methods for our Advantage beyond the reach of our Wisdom, and brings about our Happiness in such degrees as are above our Hopes and Expectations. Now how can any one but love so good and gracious a God as this? If we find within our selves such passionate Tendencies of our Souls towards the earthly Objects of our Affections; if we bear so much Love to a Father that begat us, or a Mother that nourished us; if we feel within us such a powerful Bent of our Passions, and such an Yearning of our Souls towards our Children, which are only the Off-spring of our Bodies, and the Continuers of our Name and Family; to what measure and height should our Love of God arrive, who is the Author to us of a thousand times more and greater Benefits, and to whom we owe all those other Benefits, which they only, as his Instruments, convey to us. O thou Great and Bountiful Being! who art therefore the more Great, because the more Bountiful.

Thou

Thou mightest to all Eternity have lain wrapt up within thy self, and for ever enjoyed thy own Happiness, infolded within thy own Nature; thou mightest always have delighted thy self with the Prospect of thy own Glory, and happy by thy self alone, have trodden round the endless Tracts of Eternity. But, O thou kind and beneficent Nature! Thy Goodness was so diffusive, as to communicate it self to a World of Beings; to raise out of nothing so many innumerable Creatures, to drink in the Gleams and Rays of thy overflowing Happiness; to create so many immortal Substances after thy own Image, to make them, as far as their Nature will permit, to partake of thy own Happiness, and to insure them a Duration of it, co-extended with thy own Being. *Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name.*

Secondly, *By shewing all the Signs, and making all suitable Returns we can, of a hearty Love, and a sincere Gratitude.* We must not love so great a Benefactor at a mean and a common Rate; we must not suffer our Affections towards him, to be cold, and flat, and lifeless; but they must be full of life and vigor, warmth and alacrity; our  
Love

### Chap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 173

Love must not only just keep in, but it must burn and flame before him; it must exert itself in Triumphs and Exaltations of Mind, in Cordial Thanksgivings and Ardent Devotions. We must not let our Affections be possessed by *any thing else*, but must be indifferent to Honors and Riches, and all the Glories of this World, when they come in competition with him, for he must never be Rivalled by such sordid Objects as these; but we must cry out with the Psalmist, *there is nothing that I desire in comparison of thee.* We must be cautious of *giving him any offence* or displeasure, but should endeavor to render our selves as acceptable to him as ever we can; to take advantage of all opportunities to approve our selves to his liking; to suffer no one, if possibly, to stand more in his favor than we, but to do every thing that we can to gain his Love and Approbation. We should desire *to converse with him*, as frequently as we can; we should improve all opportunities to gain time to pray to him, and praise him; to be diligent in Studying his Law, and Reading his holy Word; to be constant in the Publick Offices, and in Private Exercises and Devotions; to take pleasure in Pious Reflections and Meditations, and in Religious Discourse. These are the only ways now we can converse with God in;  
and

and if we truly love him, we shall take as much delight in this Conversation, as we do in the company of those we have the greatest kindness for. We must long to enjoy him more fully than now we do, for Love is a desire of Union ; it never rests till it has attained the Centre it tends to ; every thing that keeps it off from that, offers violence to it ; and therefore we ought to wish, that this dark Curtain of Life were drawn up, which hinders us from looking into the Intellectual World ; that this Gross Medium of Flesh and Blood, through which our Souls now look, were changed for the Spiritual Body ; and that we were let into that State, where we shall no longer *see through a Glass darkly, but shall see God face to face* ; we should long till these days of our Pilgrimage are over, and desire, with *St. Paul, to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*. So likewise, to love him is readily to obey his commands ; for when we have a hearty kindness for him, we can never trample upon those Sacred Laws which he has given us ; we can never refuse to comply with those Precepts which he has commanded us ; we can never complain of the hardship of those injunctions he has laid upon us, or do them sluggishly and unwillingly, but shall strive, with all alacrity, to be the forwardest to fulfil his Pleasure ;

we

Cap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 175

we should be proud of the opportunity we have of doing any thing for him ; we should take it as a mighty favour, that he would be pleased to Honour us so far, as to lay his Commands upon us ; and should most willingly obey him, altho' we expected no other Reward, but only the Honour of his having employed us. After this manner we act, in our Demeanor to them whom we sincerely love ; and we are apt to suspect the Love of any one, whom we find deficient in any of these particulars, and therefore we can never arrive to the true excellency of the Spiritual and Divine Love, unless we perform all that is before prescribed.

*Objection.* But you will say, that you think you other ways lead a Godly and a Christian Life ; that you do all the Good, and avoid all the Evil you can ; but you cannot find that you Love God with that earnestness and feelingness that some do ; that you never Experience that Rapturousness in Devotion, such heated Passions, and such an exundant Zeal, which animate others to do things in a manner extraordinary, for the Glory of God.

*Answer.* To this I answer, 1<sup>st</sup>. That those who obey all Gods Commands, do love him

as

as they ought, because the loving him is one of his Commands; and because the love of God does in great measure consist in keeping his Commands. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, Joh. 14. 21. This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, 1 Joh. 5. 3.* And besides, the loving God with all our Hearts, and above all things, our constant Praying to him, and Praising him, (which are the great parts of the Divine Love) are Duties commanded us in Scripture; and therefore we cannot keep his Commands, without performing these. But as for some elevated heights and raptures in Devotion, some overboilings of Zeal for Gods Honour, they are generally the effect of Mens bodily Constitutions; and to make these absolutely necessary to Salvation, is only to open Heaven Gates to People of just such a Complexion.

2dly. There are different degrees in the Spiritual Life; there is a *Salvable State*, and a *State of Heroick Piety*; so that Men of the first Rank may be content only to go on in the Common high Road of Vertue, which does not require any of the sublimated Love of the Heroick Soul; but the other must screw up their Affections to a higher pitch, must refine themselves more into the Angelick Nature, and give themselves a fore-taste of

of

### Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 177

of the Joys of the other World in this. And I doubt not, but many good Men, if they would endeavour to their utmost, to make all the Advances they can in Piety, they would soon discover that those heights and raptures, which are so discoursed of in the Descriptions of the *Spiritual Love*, have not so much of the Enthusiast in them as is pretended; For I could never be brought over to that Opinion of the *Remonstrants* and *Socinians*, That the loving God is only a bare keeping his Commands; that God is to be loved only as a *Legislator*, which is by obeying him; that if we do but obey him, 'tis no matter tho' it be only the fear of his Punishments that drives us to it; that our Obedience to him, upon account only of fear, is as Noble and as acceptable to him as that upon the score of Love; because Fear, forsooth, is one of the two Principles of our Obedience, which he has established. But this is such a poor and a flat Notion of the Divine Love, that I wonder any one, who had read the Noble Writings of that Divinest of the Apostles *St. John*, could ever entertain such mean and pitiful thoughts of that Heavenly Passion which he does so every where recommend. For can we ever think that the love of *Mary Magdalen*, which was so much applauded by our Saviour, was on-

N

ly

ly a bare cold Obedience to his Commands; that that passionate Expostulation with *St. Peter, Simon Son of Jonas lovest thou me?* was nothing else but a commanding him to feed his Sheep, and that perhaps out of fear only? How should ever a Compliance with God's Will, out of fear of his Punishments, be as acceptable to him, as an Obedience, which proceeds from the generous Principle of Love? For the Apostle tells us expressly, that *Perfect Love casteth out Fear, because fear hath torment: he that feareth is not made perfect in Love, 1 Joh. 4. 18.* A Man may begin the Spiritual Life upon the Principle of Fear, but, to make it *perfect*, he must be wrought upon by Love: The Fears of everlasting Torments may scare a Man from going forwards to Hell; but there must be some degree of Love, to conduct him to the Gates of Heaven. But to make an Obedience to the Divine Will, from the Compulsion of Fear, as noble and as well-pleasing to God, as one that proceeds from a Love of his Goodness, is as absurd, as to say, that the willing Obedience of a dutiful Son, and the frank Services of a faithful Friend, are not more generous and brave, than the forced Cringes and Crouches of a Slave, or a Spaniel.

Secondly,



### Cap.III. Contempt of the World. 179

*Secondly*, To condemn the World as we should do, We must place our Affections upon the Joys which God has promised us hereafter. Which is to be done,

First, *By heartily believing all that God has promised of them.* *In believing another State.*

We can never set our Affections upon that, which we do not stedfastly believe; for neither the Will nor the Affections can tend to what is conceived impossible. A Man may indeed give a random Wish, for that which is never likely to come to pass; but can never rationally, and upon serious Thoughts, be in love with such a Fancy. Therefore before we can thoroughly place our Affections upon the Heavenly Joys, we must fully believe the Reality of them; and that they are of that Greatness and Duration as they are represented. We must be thoroughly persuaded, that God has not made so noble a Creature as Man, to partake only of the gross Pleasures of this World; that he has not implanted in him such an earnest desire of Immortality, on purpose to delude and deceive him; that he will not permit good Men to suffer so many Calamities in this World, and either to fall to nothing, or to go unrewarded in the next; that our Blessed Saviour, by the Merits of his Cross, and

Intercession with the Father, has purchased us an *eternal weight of Glory*; that if we perform the Conditions of that Covenant, which he hath made with God for us, and which is exhibited to us in the Gospel; we shall certainly be Partakers of that blessed State of Immortality, which is there promised; that these Joys are not the Dreams of superstitious and Enthusiastical People, but such as shall certainly come to pass; that we have as much an assurance of them, as we can have of any thing that is future, as being confirmed by such infallible and divine Proofs, as will command every ones Belief; unless we could be persuaded, that God would ever lend his own Miraculous Power for the Confirmation of Lies and Impostures.

*Meditating  
upon it.*

Secondly, *By diligently Considering and Meditating upon the Greatness and Eternity of these Joys.*

The Enjoyments of the other World are so remote from us, and of such a kind, as our Nature is but little acquainted with; and moreover, worldly Objects are so continually striking upon our Senses, and gratifying them for the present, that unless we frequently give our selves to a serious Meditation of the Happiness of another Life, they will be as little apt to have an Influence upon us, as  
if

### Chap.III. *Contempt of the World.* 181

if we knew nothing, or believed nothing of them. Which is the reason why many careless and unconsidering Christians do live as wicked and dissolute Lives as any Atheists and Infidels in the World. We should consider, that Heaven is such a State of Blessedness, where we shall be freed from all the *Troubles and Anxieties*, which do so much disquiet this Life of ours; where *all Tears shall be wiped from our Eyes*, where we shall have no more sad Tryals and Persecutions, no more Pains and Sickneses, no more Grievs and Discontents, no more Delays and Disappointments, no more Doubts and Scruples, no more Errors and Misconstructions, no more peevish Contests and Quarrels; where there shall be nothing to cross our Inclinations, or disappoint our Desires, nothing to give us the least Vexation or Disquiet. We should frequently bethink our selves, that we shall then *converse with all the glorious Hierarchy of Heaven*, with so many blessed Saints and Angels, with so many Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs; with so many thousands of happy Saints that have died in the Lord; all which have Minds replenished to amazement with Divine Knowledge, and brim full of Love and Charity. Now if it be so delightful to us, to Consort with our dear Friends,

with the most knowing and pleasant Company, if we be so taken with that little Information and Diversion they can give us; how must our Joy abound, to associate our selves with such Angelick and Divine Company, that are so profoundly knowing in the eternal and mysterious Truths of the Deity, that have in them all the ravishing Arts of Indearment; to behold their unspotted Souls, and glorified Bodies, to joyn in the melodious Consort of their Heavenly Anthems, and with them to sing everlasting Praises and Hallelujahs? How shall we rejoyce to behold the glorified Body of our blessed Redeemer, which was seen in this World in Contempt and Poverty; but shall there be exalted to the greatest Majesty, and shall shine forth ten thousand times brighter than the Sun in his Meridian Glory? We shall then be let in to a *closer View of the Essence of God*, and to a nearer Knowledge of the All-great Triune Deity, that inexhaustable Stock of Mysteries; in the Contemplation of which, the loftiest Cherubims lose themselves, and have their Thoughts drowned in the unfathomable Abyss. We should think, how we are then to be compleatly Happy, both Body and Soul, which shall each of them enjoy more Pleasure than they can desire, or can wish for. When we shall  
be

Cap. III. *Contempt of the World.* 183

be array'd in a Body more strong and durable than the firmest Adamant, more agil than the nimble Light, more beautiful and glorious than the Sun it self. When our Souls shall be endowed with an unconceivable Capacity of knowing, when our Understandings shall be continually fed with the knowledge of the most desirable Truths, when the Godhead shall be always more and more revealing and unfolding his Nature to us, and we for ever more and more transcribing the delightful Revelations; when our Wills and Affections shall be fully satisfied by enjoying God, the greatest and sublimest Good; when our Bodies too, shall enjoy Pleasures suitable to their spiritualized Nature; when in short, we shall have all our Appetites satisfied to the Brim, without being cloy'd; when our Enjoyments shall outrun our very Desires; when we shall experience more Pleasure in the Fruition, than we could hope for in our Expectation. 'Tis in vain further to go about to describe an inexpressible State of Glory; for when all is said that can be said, all the noblest Metaphors and Illustrations, which Rhetorick can afford, or a luxuriant Fancy produce, all will be still flat and low in respect of the Mighty Subject; nay, that all will be no more than what the Apostle has said in a Word: *Eye hath not seen, nor ear*

*hath heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But yet there is one thing we should consider further, a thing that doubles and trebles, nay, that infinitely enhances all the other Happiness, and adds more to it, than if all the Atoms of the whole Universe were added to one single Unity : I mean the Eternity of it. Eternity ! Eternity ! a Word big with Wonder and Amazement. An indefectible Present ; an unalterable Now ; a Time that is always beginning, and never ending ; that shall be as far from expiring ten Millions of Years hence, as it is at this Moment. Any thing that is Eternal, is worth every thing that is Temporal. For there is no Comparison between them. The Duration of the one does infinitely surpass the Greatness of the other. Were I but to enjoy the Pleasure I feel now in this delightful Contemplation for ever, for ever ! Oh it would be a foolish Exchange, to take in lieu of it the Monarchy of these Kingdoms, though it were to the end of the World. What say we then to an Eternity of vast unspeakable Pleasures, that we are to enjoy in the other World ? It should certainly methinks make us despise all the poor, little, shortliv'd things in this : or surely, one would suppose, no one could  
be

be so silly to forfeit his Interest in such an eternal Inheritance, for some momentary Trifle here, for the Misers little Gain, or the Voluptuaries Sensuality. I am sure *Esaú's* parting with his Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage, and *Mark Antony's* losing the Opportunity of a Victory for a Mistress, was a considerable Point of Reason and Prudence to such an egregious piece of Folly and Stupidity as this.

Thirdly, *In earnestly desiring, and longing for this Happiness.*

And truly this is the natural Result of the two former Considerations ; for if we believe, and consider the Greatness of those Joys, we cannot if we would, hinder our desiring and longing for them. For there is such a Magnetick, Attractive Force in the Heavenly Joys, towards those that devoutly contemplate them ; that a Man can as soon hate himself, and be out of Love with his own Happiness, as not to long for such Joys that promise such ravishing Pleasure. Therefore, when we think of the other World, we must let all our Affections lie centered there, and think every Minute of our Life adds to our Unhappiness, that keeps us out from it. We should think it long before our Souls are discharged from this dark  
Dunge.

Dungeon of Clay, before they are delivered from these Clogs and Fetters of Flesh and Blood ; before they are manumitted and set free into the Intellectual World, and never more to undergo such a deplorable Bondage. We should wish that our tedious and hazardous Voyage were at an end, that we might see no more those boisterous Storms we meet with here, that we could but safely land that rich Lading we are freighted with, and arrive securely at the blessed Haven of Immortality. We should be perfectly impatient till this State of our Probation were over, that we might have no more Doubts and Fears of our Miscarriage, but that we might enter upon an actual Enjoyment of that Happiness we aspire to. We should eagerly desire, that our Race we are running were finished, that we were secure of the Prize we are contending for, that we had the Crown upon our Heads we have been so long waiting for ; and we should esteem every thing that retards that our triumphal Happiness, as most unlucky and prejudicial to us.



C H A P. IV.

*Of the Reasons why we should condemn the World.*

**I**N the foregoing Sections I have been shewing the Reasons, why we should despise those particular Vices, which so great a number of Men do set their Hearts upon; but now I shall shew, by two or three Arguments, that all those Temptations of the World, which are so apt to ensnare Men into Sin, are really unworthy of that Affection which Men set upon them; and are fit to be undervalued and contemned by all Men of Religion and ordinary Sense. And of the many Reasons which may be alledged, I shall produce only these few.

I. *The*

- I. *The Pleasures of this World ought to be contemned, because they are common to Evil Men, as well as to Good.*
  - II. *Because they are so uncertain.*
  - III. *Because they are in themselves vain and inconsiderable.*
  - IV. *Because they are Unsatisfying.*
  - V. *Because they are Cloying and Surfeiting.*
  - VI. *Because we must in a very little while leave them.*
  - VII. *Because we are in pursuit of far greater Pleasures.*
- 

## S E C T. I.

*The Pleasures of this World ought to be Contemned, because they are common to Evil Men, as well as to Good.*

**W**HEN we see Riches and Honors, &c. possessed by Evil Men, as well as Good, it should methinks take off the Edge of our Appetite to them, by considering that such base and sensual Men have the most to do with them that they have the greatest Share

W. Chap.IV. *Contempt of the World.* 189

Share of the good Things of this World, who are the declared Enemies of God, and all Good Men. Now if we account every thing to lose proportionably of its Value, as it is common to base and ignoble People, if we disdain to imitate our Enemies in any thing they do; then, with how great a Scorn should we look down upon all the Glories of this World, which are possessed by Men, whom Vice has debased to the utmost Contempt: With what a disdainful Eye should we behold them, when they are used by those that are avowed Enemies to our Great Creator, and are of such different Principles and Practices from us? So again, Methinks any reasonable Man should think fit to despise That, which God, the wisest of all rational Beings, does think fit to undervalue. Now we find, that God sets so little Esteem upon the Pleasures of this World, that he suffers his greatest Enemies quietly to enjoy them; he thinks it not worth his while to put them out of Possession of them in this Life; he reckons them such inconsiderable Trifles, and to be enjoyed for so short a time, that it is beneath the Dignity of his Providence, to adjust the Distribution of them here; especially when they are to pay so dearly for their Sins hereafter. Therefore, unless we think our selves wiser than

than God, we should think them little and inconsiderable too; and should conclude, they are not Noble enough to set our Hearts upon, when the Providence of God, that (as the Scripture tells us) takes notice of Sparrows, and the Hairs of our Head, does hardly vouchsafe a Cognizance of them. And lastly, When we see such great Honors, and vast Estates possessed by wicked Men, and so many of God's dearest Saints lying in the most forlorn State of Poverty; it should strangely lessen our Esteem of those things, which God seems purposely to keep away from his best Servants. For God generally has another sort of Discipline for Good Men to go through in this World, Hardships and Trouble, Care and Afflictions, or Want and Poverty. *If any Man (says our Saviour) will be my Disciple, let him take up his Cross and follow me.* That is, if any Man will be my Disciple, he must partake of my Cross; if he will fight under my Banner, he must drink of my Cup; but if he be so tender and delicate, that he cannot down with Afflictions, he is no fit Follower of me, the persecuted Jesus, who am a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*; my Religion does not entitle Men to Beds of Down and Ivory, when I my self have not where to lay my head. And the Apostle reads us just the same  
Lecture,

Cap. IV. *Contempt of the World.* 191

Lecture, *Heb. 12. 7, 8.* *If you endure chastening, then God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he, whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons.* And upon this account it was, that several pious Christians of old time, having found themselves to have enjoyed a very great share of the Happiness of this World, have prayed to God, that he would be pleased to visit them with some Affliction or other, that might somewhat abate their uninterrupted Prosperity, least such a constant Tide of Worldly Happiness should preclude them from God's Favour, and be a Bar to their Legitimacy in Grace. Now, though I will not affirm, that Riches and Honours, and other Pleasures of this World are Things to be prayed against, or that Afflictions are to be desired; yet these last are such usual Concomitants of Piety, that, when a Man finds himself carried on in a constant Series of Prosperity, without any mixture of Crosses and Troubles, it will be apt to make him mistrust his Condition, and raise some Misgivings within him, that he is not among the Number of God's Children, upon whom the Gospel does entail so many Calamities and Sufferings. And therefore certainly every prudent Christian will retain but little Esteem

Esteem and Love for those things which may put his Soul to so much Hazzard, and occasion so great a Distrust of his future Happiness.

## S E C T. II.

*We ought to condemn this World, beause the Pleasures of it are so uncertain.*

**N**othing is truly valuable, the Duration of which is not ascertained to us, and the end of which we are shortly like to see. And this is the reason, as I observed before, why Eternity was the most inestimable thing that could be, because it has that certainty of continuing always. Now this Truth is likewise confirmed by the common Judgment and Opinion of all Mankind, who for this reason esteem a Great Man himself happier, than those who are about him, and converse with him; for though they often have as pleasant a View of his stately House and costly Furniture, and do frequently partake of all the Delicacies of his Table, yet this is but now and then, or as long as he pleases; whilest he is supposed to have the Enjoyment of them for his Life, and without Controul. Now the Pleasures of this World are so very uncertain, and we can depend

#### Chap.IV. *Contempt of the World.* 193

depend upon them so little ; that to set a mighty value upon them for our short precarious possession of them, is as Ridiculous as for a Man to pride himself upon his now and then Dining at Court, or his Walking in the Park ; as much or more, than if he were the Great Lord and Owner of them both. For really there are none of all the Gay pleasures, which Men are so Enamoured with ; but are as uncertain, as ever the Wheels of Fortune can make them. To give but an instance or two, one would think, that a *Large Estate* were too big a thing, to be whisked away after Fortunes Chariot ; and yet she seems to be more humorfom in nothing, than in the disposal of these. We make indeed a great bustle to get an Estate, which we think will perpetuate our Name and Family ; we pretend that we buy it for ever, but there is never a greater Solecism in our Language, and we are never more miserably deceiv'd, than in this. For there is not one Estate in forty, that directly continues in the same Family, it was in King *James* the 1's time, which is not threescore and ten years ago ; and for ought I know, 'tis probable that this spot of ground, I now tread upon, since the Conquest, which is not much above *five* hundred years, may have

O

had

had *one* hundred Owners. But alas ! an Estate is so far from being apt to continue in a Family, that it often leaves us before we die. How many brave flourishing Estates have been lost only by Espousing a Weaker Faction in the State ; and have in an instant been swallowed up in the Victors Booty ? How many have been decayed and lost by the Calamities and Charges of Wars, how many by providing for a great Number of Children, and how many by the Miscarriage of them, how many by unexpected Losses, how many by ill Titles, and how many more by the Riot and Luxury of the Owners ? So that, he that looks upon an Estate, as a certain thing, may with more sense think the Wind and the Weather so. For these, tho' they are very variable ; yet they have their Vicissitudes, and turn about to the same Point again ; but an Estate once gone from us, is never likely to return. And so it happens in the case of *Honour*, which is one of the most uncertain fickle things we can possess. Let a Man but once lose his Estate, and his Honour will be too poor a thing to support it self. Every body will slight and despise such indigent Dignity : A necessitous Lord grows cheap and contemptible to a Wealthy Ale-House keeper.



keeper. How many great *Sejanns's* have we seen, that whilst they have kept their Princes Favour, have had the Knees and Tongues of half the Nation at their Devotion, whom their Flatterers have in a manner Deified and Adored ; when they have no sooner fell into Disgrace with their Prince, but their Honour has seem'd Putrified in the Nostrils of Men ; who have at last vilified and affronted them more, than they ever before Respected them ? What Fame is so Bright, which is not to be sullied by the Defamatory Tongues of malicious Men ? The Regal Honour is the greatest, and the least liable to diminution, because the Vulgar are apt naturally to admire such greatness, and not to see or believe Faults, in the midst of so much Splendor ; and yet we have known that the best perhaps of Kings, that was a Glory to the Diadem, lost his Honour with the greatest part of his Subjects, by the virulent Libels and malicious Insinuations of some few Republican Spirits, who lied him, as much as in them lay, both out of his Life and Innocency. Again, what a variable thing is Beauty, which so many admire in others, and are Proud of in themselves ? The best Face cannot be insured against the small Pox only ; Nay, twenty other Diseases

seases will turn the most Celebrated Beauty into a Spectacle of another kind. Or if neither of these chance to do it, Age will do it effectually; and there is not much of Age required neither; for the loss of Beauty is ordinarily survived thirty or forty years; therefore, all such should be cautious how they Value themselves over much upon that, which they may possess ten years, but if they live out their time, they must be without forty.

### S E C T. III.

*The Pleasures of this World ought to be Contemned, because they are in themselves Vain and Inconsiderable.*

AS for that great Pleasure of being Rich, it is really one of the greatest Vanities; for tho Wealth be well used by spending it as handsomly as one can; yet, if we consider, it makes a Man as Ridiculous as *Seneca* *Grandio*, whom *Seneca* so Laughs at in his Controversies; That would have his Servants, his Plate, his Victuals and Shoes, his Mistress and all of an hugeous Size. So a Rich Man must have a great House, a great many Servants, a great deal of Victuals, a great deal of Company, a great deal

#### Chap.IV. *Contempt of the World.* 197

deal of Formality, and a great deal of Impertinency; when one quarter of any of it, and none of some of it would do far better. There is no doubt such a thing as true *Honour* in the World, that is the just praise Men attain for their Vertue and Bravery; but that which is generally Reputed such, and which most Men aim at, is one of the Vainest things in Nature. What a business is a Great Swelling Title, for a Man to Pride himself upon? They are just so many Words or Names, which will neither make a Man Wiser nor better. They are such, as an Herald can produce an hundred of them in an hour; and such as the poor Barbarous people out do us in; for the Style of a little Petty Prince, in the *East-Indies*, out-swaggers the Medals of his most Christian Majesty. I am apt to think, that an Old Greek or Roman who knew no Honour but what followed the Office, would have Laughed heartily, to have seen our Modern Lists of Nobility; to Read of Barons and Counts, Marquisses and Dukes of such Places, where perhaps, they have not one Foot of Land, or one jot of Interest. These Titles, 'tis True, are Marks of Distinction, which the Supreme Magistrate in every Nation gives forth, to shew what place each one should take in

the Common Wealth, and every one is obliged to maintain, and to give place accordingly; but to think, that there is more than this in these Titles; or that they do confer a real Worth, where there is none before; or to behave our selves haughtily, upon this Account; is only to be Proud of bare *Fiocco's* and Feathers. And so again, as for that All-Glorious thing called *Fame*, that great Bait for Ambitious Spirits; it is too pitiful a thing, to be Courted at so passionate a Rate. Obscurity and the not being taken Notice of is a thing which most Men mortally hate; but it is, because they do not enough consider its advantages. But be that as it will, yet what Advantage does a Man get by being much Talked of, and much stared at; by being much admired and praised by some, and much censured by others? Could we Arrive to all the Fame we aim at, it would be but a silly thing, when it was attained; but not the thousand part of those that desired to be Famous, ever could be so. There are not much above half a Score Names, of so many Millions of People that lived in the Heathen World, that are really Famous now, and are in every Bodies Mouths; such as the Authors of two or three Philosophical Sects, as *Aristotle*,

Cap. IV. *Contempt of the World.* 199

*Astote*, *Plato* and *Epicurus*; or some Great Warriors, as *Alexander* and *Cesar* and the like; and these are known only by the sound of the Names, and nothing else to most people; but all the other Multitude of Antiquity are either totally lost in their Graves, or some few of them known only by some Bookish Men. Nay, if a Man has only a Design upon Fame, as long as he lives, it is but a very little Portion of it, which he is like to get. For a Man should consider, that there are so many Men in the World, that every Body is not like to know every Body. The Chief Minister of State in *France* is not I believe Personally known to the thousandth part of that Kingdom, nor by his Name to an hundredth part of this; and yet how many Millions of Men are there, that are never likely to be a quarter so Famous as Monsieur *Pompe*. The Nobility of the Nation and the Prime Officers at Court are those, that are the most Famous amongst us; and yet they are utterly unknown by so much as their Titles to the greatest part of the Nation; and to the rest mostly by Lists and by Hearsay. One that makes a very great Figure among us here, is never heard of perhaps in *Germany*, or *Denmark*. But if Fame consists only

in being known and admired ; then our Mountebanks and Players are the famousest Men in all the Kingdom ; and therefore 'tis hardly worth any Wise Man's while , to seek after that which the Refuse of the Kingdom can so easily attain to. Well, but is not Fame after Death a Noble Purchase ? Why, truly I think but an indifferent one for a Christian to trouble himself about ; who expects some other Pleasures after Death , than the being talked of. The Heathens 'tis true, were very fond of this, a *Volito clara per ora Virum* was all they had to comfort them against the fears of Death , when they wanted the Revelation of another State ; but they are in some measure to be excused , because they found within themselves an impetuous desire of Immortality , and could not easily see any other way to effect it, but only by this. But for us Christians, to despise the Joys of Paradise for the clattering of peoples Tongues , is an unpardonable Affront offer'd to our Religion ; it is a worse Indignity put upon God , than the *Israelites* longing for Garlick and Onions, when they fed upon the Food of Angels. But waving this Argument, what good does Fame after Death do any Man ? I will instance in the most famous Man of  
all

#### Chap. IV. *Contempt of the World.* 201

all Antiquity, I mean *Aristotle*; for as for *Alexander* and *Cesar*, I look upon them to be infamously so, far beneath that Wretch that burnt the *Ephesian* Temple; two barbarous Butchers of Mankind, that cut the Throats of so many Innocent People, to Sacrifice to their Wicked Ambition. I say, *Aristotle*, he that was Tutor (if that be any Fame) to the greatest Conqueror in the World; that had the most Universal Genius of all the Sons of *Adam*; that brought Philosophy into some Method and Intelligibleness, which was Cant and Jargon before; that was, I may say, the Inventor of Logick, that Great Pillar of Reason; that was so admirable a Critick in Poetry, that both *Epick* and *Lyrick*, as well as the *Drammaticks* will stand obliged to him Eternally; that gave the most admirable Rules in Rhetorick, which ever the World had, or I dare say ever shall have; that wrote such a System of Morality, as was never equalled, till the Sermon upon the Mount; whose Physiology was better than the best of his Time, and will still be in Reputation and Request, when the *Cartesius's* and *Gassendus's* shall not be heard of; whose Heterodoxies in Divinity are better defended, than other Mens Truths; whose Books have been Read ten thousand

thousand times over, and as many Volumes of Comments Wrote or Printed upon them ; who was almost the only Study of Learned Men for many Ages, whose Assertions are taken, in most Controversies, as undoubted Axioms, and are defended every day in most of the famous Schools of *Europe* ; to whom we are obliged for our usual distinctions and Terms of Art in our ordinary Discourse, such as *Material, Formal, Subject, Object*, &c. which were first of his Coyning : I say *Aristotle*, that has all this Fame entailed upon him, can receive no Benefit from it after Death. If he be happy, he has something better to busie his thoughts about ; or, if he be miserable it will not relieve him. If he has ceased to be, he knows nothing of it now ; and before his Death, he could never have expected it. So that in short, as to all the good this Fame can have done this great Philosopher, since his Death ; he had e'en as good have been, *Cleanthes, Speusippus, Crantor*, or *Corneades*, for whom we are beholding to other Authors, that we know any thing of.

Next, as to the sensual Pleasures of this World, that Men run with so great a Gust and impetus to ; they are all of them so vain and inconsiderable in themselves ; that one



Cap. IV. *Contempt of the World.* 203

one would Wonder, that ever Men could be so foolish, to put their Souls to such infinite hazard, for such Trifles. For most of the greatest Pleasures, we can enjoy, amount to no more, than the freeing us from some indisposition, and bringing to a State of Indolence or want of Pain. What is the Pleasure of Eating and Drinking, but only the asswaging the Uneasiness of our Hunger and Thirst; which when they are over, the Pleasure is gone? What is all the delight of our usual Sports and Pastimes, but only some Artificial Methods, to pass away the Tedious Minutes of our uncomfortable Time? Nay, as for those Pleasures, which seem to have more positiveness in their Nature, they are all so Fleeting and Vanishing; that we have lost them, before we can be well said, to have them.

S E C T.

## S E C T. IV.

*The Pleasures of this World ought to be  
contemned, because they are Unsatisfy-  
ing.*

**N**OW the Pleasures of this World are  
*Unsatisfying* upon these Three Ac-  
counts.

I. Because they are not the True Good of the Soul. Now the Nature of the Soul, as of every thing else, can never be satisfied, but with that which is, or which tends to its own Good. We may indeed delude it and put Tricks upon it, and quiet its Appetite for some time; but its Desires will still spring up a fresh, and will be fully satisfied with nothing, but what tends to its true Happiness and Perfection. Thus we see a great number of Men live on jollily as they suppose, in an eager pursuit of sensual Pleasures; and think by them to gratifie that impatient desire of Happiness, they find their Souls always to retain; but when ever they give themselves leave to think, they perceive their Minds to recoil upon them; they feel those Enjoyments they have glutted them with, sit uneasie on them; they find, that these fleshy Delights

#### Chap.IV. *Contempt of the World.* 205

lights are no fit Food for the Soul, that the more we cram her with these sort of Dainties, the more we starve her. For in good reality we may as well think, to satisfy our Stomachs with Stones and Pebbles, as our Souls with Riot and Luxury ; we may as well try to Nourish our Bodies with Arguments and Notions, as our Minds with Eating and Drinking. We may indeed by long Custom bring our Soul into such a Disease, as to think this Trash more Palatable than at first ; but we can never make it so natural to her, but that she must sometime dislike it, especially when she finds it is like to Ruin and destroy her. So that if we would have true satisfaction in this World, we should endeavour to satisfy our *Souls*, which are truly *Us* ; and that is, by a Course of Vertue and the Study of knowledg ; but without these, let us do or possess what we will, we shall be miserable, in the greatest Glut of Pleasures.

2. The Pleasures of this World are Unsatisfying, because they promise more Enjoyment, than they can give. I know not upon what Account it is, whether that Mens Judgments are blinded by the Subtily of the Devil, or by the Impetuosity of their own Desires ; that they always  
fancy

fancy there is more Enjoyment in any sensual Pleasure, than they find to be. But I appeal to the Experience of all Men, if it be not so. With what impatience doth the young Heir wait for the Estate he is Intituled to? How doth he long to be freed from the Yoke of Parents and Tutors? What Pleasure does he cut out for himself, in the full Possession of so large a Fortune? But when the Good Old Parent is gone to his Fathers, and the Impatient Successor has possessed his Place, he finds his condition altered not one jot for the better; and he perceives now at last, that he must undergo the trouble also of that Estate, all the Pleasures of which he enjoy'd before. What strange Ideas of Happiness does the eager Competitor for a Preferment raise in his Brain, what Wealth and Honour, what Pleasure and satisfaction does he promise to himself, if he can but succeed in his design? And when he does succeed, how flatly doth every thing Answer his expectation, how ordinary do those fancied joys appear, and how doth he find himself not at all happier, than before his Competition? It is needless to give more instances for this Truth, because all Men are convinced of it: And therefore it is matter of Wonder, that

that they do not, with joynt consent, undervalue and despise those Pleasures, which put such an apparent Cheat upon all Mankind.

3. They are Unsatisfying as they have much Evil or Sorrow mixed with them.

Men may be apt to think, that there is no Happiness like the *Regal Glory*, that no Joys on this side Heaven, are like those of the Glittering Diadem; but alas! they never consider, what a Pain it is to have the Cares of a whole Nation in one breast; to have ones Patience Racked and Tentered by unwelcome Petitions, to have ones Quiet every Minute disturbed by importunate Addresses; to be forced against ones Stomach upon constant business; to be so full of Caution and Dread, of treading any step awry; to be continually thinking, how to balm up differences in State, and to reconcile contrary Factions; how to appease Enemies, and to gain Friends; in short, how to manage, and how to humor so many thousand Peevish and Discontented Spirits. *Places of Honour* are dazzling things to look upon, and which all Ambitious Men desire; but then they do not consider the variableness and danger of them, that such Great Men, as they are high, they are always tottering; that  
then

then Envy is continually ready to trip up their Heels: and that their Elevation will but make their fall the Heavier. *Riches* indeed are things, which all Men are desiring, Courtiers a begging, Church-men soliciting, and Tradesmen a getting; but let a Man cast up all the Trouble he must take along with them; the Pains in purchasing them, the Care in keeping them, and the Vexation he may have in losing them; and at length he will find, that he shall not be much the happier for them. Let the dissolute *Voluptuary*, that thinks he engrosses all the Joys of the World to himself, and drinks full Draughts of Unmixed Pleasures; that despises all those Melancholy Religious, that think there is any other satisfaction, besides his *Vive hodie*; let him but compute how much Tiresomeness there is in a dissolute Course of Life, how much Sickness is undergone by repeated Debauches, what a sink of Diseases a Man's Body is made by a Habit of Lewdness; and then let him speak of the great Pleasures of such a Life.

S E C T. V.

*The Pleasures of this World are to be despised, because they are Cloying and Surfeiting.*

**T**Here is no Pleasure truly valuable but what we may take a full draught of, and which our Appetite will serve us to enjoy over and over ; but the Pleasures of this World almost cloy us at the first Taste ; and we grow more weary of them afterwards, than we were desirous of them before. And this is

I. Because we quickly find an end of all the satisfaction they can afford us. There is no Infinite to be found here, no inexhaustible stock of Pleasures, which can never be enjoyed over ; but only some poor puny ones, thin, stuck about the desired Object ; which the greedy Appetite swallows immediately, and then the Pleasure is gone. We find so little in them at first, that it is nauseous to go over them again ; they may serve a little to divert us once or twice, but we are surfeited with them afterward. We are forced to use a great deal of Art, you see, to take any tolerable

lerable Pleasure in a delicate way of Living ; we must chop and change our Dishes every day, to make our Palats relish even those studied Delicacies. The Pleasure of a new purchased Honour , is no more than that of a New Suit of Cloaths, 'tis gone after one days wearing. The satisfaction we take in a New Built House is vanished as soon as it is finished. In short, all the Pleasures of this World , are but like Childrens Toys to us ; we are a while disposed to play with them a little ; but afterwards we are fain to throw them aside.

2. Because they generally indispose our Bodies. Let the Drunkard but consider how wearisom a Vice is his, how it Harasses his Body ten times more than the severest Labour, how it makes him drudg at his Glass, more than he would do at the Oar ; let him think, if after his hight of Jollity, the Morrow is not a Day of Sorrow , if the present Indisposition he feels doth not make his Crowned Bowels more Nauseous to him, than his Physitians Drugs. Let the Lustful Man speak, if his broken Constitution and his Stupid Soul, that hangs as loose about him as his Joynts, does not take off his Appetite from that Vice, which has so enervated both his Body  
always



Cap. IV. Contempt of the World. 211

and Mind. Nay, even our Pastimes, which are to refresh us after our Labour, in a short time weary us themselves; so that at last we are forced to take Sanctuary again in Labour, to recreate us upon their Tiresomeness,

S E C T. VI.

*The Pleasures of this World ought to be despised, because we must in a very little while leave them.*

**I**T would be an inexcusable piece of folly, for a Man to fall in Love with the Inn he is to Lodg in but one Night, because it is perhaps a pretty contrived place, and he has all things handsomly about him. A Wise Man would rather consider, that tho' this is a pretty Place, yet it can signifie but little to him, who is so very shortly to leave it; if he was always to live there, it was something, but he must away from it the next Morning; that it is in vain to set his Affections upon that, which he cannot stay to gratifie them with. Now why should we not be as Wise, as to our thoughts about the things of this Life. The Scripture tells us over and over, and our Reason convinces

us, that this Life is but a Pilgrimage and a time of sojourning; that to be enamoured of the good things of this World is as foolish, as to intend a Journey, and to take up our Habitation upon the Road. Nay, the time we are to Lodg at an Inn takes up some valuable part of the space of our short Life; for the youngest Man cannot expect to live fourty thousand times longer than the twelve hours he is to stay there. But the time we have to stay in this World bears no proportion to the time we must live in the next. All the time we have to live here is not much, if we consider it in it self, threescore and ten years (granting we live so long) are not the threescore and tenth part of the time; which the World has already continued; Nay, farther if we had lived the whole five thousand years, it would have been nothing to Eternity, it would not have been so much as one Unite, to all the Figures in a Table of Logarithms set at Length; not so much as one Atome to the whole *Magnus Orbis*.

But without this Consideration, the bare thoughts of being once to part with the Pleasures of this World, are enough to damp our Spirits, and quell our Affections towards them. Let but the Great Man consider, that a time will come, when  
he

**Chap. IV. Contempt of the World. 213.**

he shall lie faint and drooping upon his last Bed; when all his dainty Confections and Artificial Dishes shall be Flat and Insipid to his Decay'd Palat; when all the Jolly Mirth of a Drinking Entertainment shall be changed, for the Melancholy Looks of Grieving Friends, and a despairing Physician; when his Bags of Gold, and his large Possessions can no more comfort his Soul, than they can relieve his Body; when he shall find his Estate must be left whither he will or no, and that the impatient Heir is there ready to catch the dropping Inheritance; that he must shortly change his Costly Robes for a few Vile Weeds of Flax or Flannel; that he must lose his Splendid and Delightful Mansion, for a Dark and Cold Grave, where he that has Commanded the Knees of so many fine Supplicants, shall be trampled upon by the Foot of every Poor Goer-by. And when a Man seriously considers this, he will not be so greatly Enamoured of those things, which he is so certain to part with, and it may be so very soon; which he must go perfectly stript of into the other World, and may be some time without enjoying them in this.

## S E C T. VII.

*The Pleasures of this World ought to be despised, because we are in Pursuit of far greater Pleasures.*

**W**E have before considered, how great the Happiness of another World is, and therefore, if we have any Reason or Sense, we must look upon all the Pleasures of this World, as but poor and pitiful things, in respect of that. Whilst we have that Noble Prospect in our Eye, we must overlook these little Gayeties, which present themselves before us here; whilst we are running for that Glorious Immortal Crown, we must not make a stop at all the sorry Trash, that lies in the way; whilst we are contending for so valuable Prize in the other World, we must not aim at such Trifles, as we find in this. Farewel therefore ye Perishing Riches, what are ye to that Immortal Inheritance, which is prepared for me, by my Blessed Saviour? Farewel ye Gilded Honours of this World, what are ye, to that substantial Eternal Weight of Glory, which is purchased for me by my Glorious Redeemer? Farewel frail and fading Beauty, what

Cap. IV. *Contempt of the World.* 215

what art thou to the Charms of that Angel-like Body, with which at the last day I shall meet my Triumphant Saviour in the Clouds? Farewel ye Pleasant Friends and entertaining Company; for what are ye, to the dear Embraces of Fellow Saints and Angels? What is your short-lived Mirth and Pleasure, to these Eternal Consorts of the Heavenly Hallelujahs? Assure to me, my Gracious God! The Pleasures of that Life, and let the eager Courtiers of them take all the Joys of this; let me be one of those that sit on thy *Right Hand* there, and dispose as thou pleatest the Blessings of thy *Left Hand* here: I shall not grudge to part with all, whilst I gain thee O Blessed State of Immortality! Write my Name in thy Book, O my Glorious Creator, Sanctifie me with thy Grace, O thou ever Blessed Spirit! and then Come, Lord Jesus, make no long tarrying.

---

---

A  
DIALOGUE  
ON THE  
*Contempt of the* WORLD.  
Between the  
TEMPTER *and* SOUL.

---

TEMPTER.

Come Noble Soul enjoy the day,  
And drive distracting Cares away:  
For Pleasures Heav'n did Thee design,  
Then Crown with Roses and with Wine.

SOUL

S O U L.

To Heav'nly Bliss the Heav'nly King  
Designs Immortal Souls to bring;  
Such Frothy Joys thou dost prepare,  
Thou Foolish Monarch of the Air.

T E M P T E R.

See how the Cenerous Juice inspires.  
Noble Thoughts and soft Desires;  
See Wit, like it, sparkling and Bright,  
That steals away the Nimble Night.

S O U L.

No rather, *Tempter*, let me find  
The Comforts of a Peaceful mind;  
Such Joys, as Ravisht Saints do feel,  
As they Devout at Altar Kneel.

T E M P T E R,

Oh! Taste the Joys of tender Love,  
The softness of the Paphian Dove.

See!

See! How Transported Lovers lie,  
And in *Elysium* seem to die.

S O U L.

No feel the Joys from him above,  
Who's God of Peace as well as Love:  
Unmingled Bliss and constant Charms,  
Flow only, Jesu, from thy Arms.

T E M P T E R.

The Misers Pleasure next Adore,  
The Beauties of the shining Ore,  
How Pleasant is it to behold  
Large Farms and ponderous Bags of Gold!

S O U L.

I joy with th' Eye of Faith to see  
The Riches of Eternity:  
These always shall remain the same,  
Whilst those shall perish in the Flame.

TEMP.



**T E M P T E R.**

Go thou in Honours Chariot Ride  
And Triumph in the Glorious Pride;  
Fames Trumpet speak thy Praise aloud,  
Thou Walking thro' the bowing Crow'd.

**S o u l.**

Thou know'st, false Friend, the greatest Fame  
Vertue and Religion claim :  
And what the Noblest-Honour brings,  
Is for to serve the King of Kings,

**T E M P T E R.**

Then toucht with some Celestial Flame  
Seek out at least some future Fame :  
Mens Tongues shall thee a Being give  
And make thee in the Grave to live.

**S o u l.**

I hope in Heav'n Eternally  
To live, when thou shalt Wish to die.

When

When an immortal Starry Crown.  
My joyful Temples shall surround:  
When a New Body all Divine  
Shall the *Phæbean* Lamp outshine:  
When I shall see, ith' Triune Glass,  
Whate're *shall be* or *is* or *was* :  
When I shall feel my exulting Soul,  
In Oceans of fresh Pleasure Role :  
When Death and Time shall be no more,  
But New Joys still augment the store ;  
And an Eternal *Next* shall always be before.

---

F I N I S.

---

BOOKS Printed, and are to be sold by  
F. Saunders.

**T**HE Baronage of England, 2 Vol. by  
Sir William Dugdale.

Beaumont and Fletchers Works.

Shakespears Works.

Ben Johnson's Works.

Mr. Cowley's Works.

Sir William Davenants Works.

The History of the Council of Trent.

The Civil Wars of France, by Davilo.

The History of Venice, by Paulo Paratu.

Earl of Orrerys Plays.

Sir Robert Howards Plays.

The History of Siam, by Monsieur Lou  
Bere in English, with Cuts.

Mr. Killigrews Plays.

Mr. Drydens Plays and Poems.

Mr. Shadwells Plays.

Sir Charles Sedley's Plays.

Sir George Elheredges Plays.

Mr. Wycherly's Plays.

Sherlock's Practical Christian.

Mr. Wallers Poems.

Sir

*A Catalogue of Books, &c.*

Sir *John Denhams* Poems.

Dr. *Dam's* Poems.

*Hudibras* ———

*Quevedo's* Visions.

*Scarroon's* Novels.

The Life of *Alexander* the Great.

The Life of *Theodosius* the Great.

Memoirs of the Court of *Spain*.

Mr. *Boyles* Seraphick Love.

——— Style of the Scriptures.

A Present for the Ladies, being an Historical Account of the Female Sex.

*Zingis* a Tartarian History.

*Sultan* of *Barbary*, a Novel.

*Philantry* and *Bellamour*, a Novel.

## E R R A T A.

**P**AGE 6. for *things it self*, read *things themselves*. p. 21. f. *the wise*, r. *Tho' wise*. p. 23. f. *from Disposition of Body*, r. *from an Indisposition of Body*. p. 30. f. *five particulars*, r. *six particulars*. Ibid. add, 6ly. *To place our Affections on Heavenly things*. p. 36. f. *Judicial*, r. *Judaical*. p. 52. f. *which Rich Men*, &c. r. *which Rich Men envy the Poor Man for, and would sometimes part with all they have to enjoy*. p. 61. f. *contribute*, r. *contributes*. p. 100. f. *inbred*, r. *ill-bred*. p. 110. f. *Almighty goodness*, r. *the Almighty goodness*. p. 116. f. *Laws*, r. *Law*. p. 119. f. *Arius and Dioscorus*, r. *Arius and Novatianus*. p. 122. blot out or. p. 124. f. *Letnuli*, r. *Lentuli*. p. 125. f. *so due courteousness*, r. *a due*. ibid. f. *and be far*, r. *and to be far*. p. 134. f. *his Sunshine*, r. *this Sunshine*. p. 137. f. *one ill success*, r. *our ill success*.